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Arab-Israeli Talks

Israeli Sources Report Progress at Arms Control Talks

TA2005103393 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 20 May 93 p A1

[Text] The discussions of the working group on arms control and regional security, currently taking place in Washington within the framework of the multilateral talks, are characterized by progress and a businesslike atmosphere. This was reported last night by Israeli sources in Washington. The sources added that the working group was "more tangibly" engaged in examining various ways to implement the confidence-building measures already discussed at the previous round of talks in Moscow.

They said that the group may already establish subcommittees during this round of talks, in order to discuss the possibility of implementing these steps in four major fields: the establishment of a regional coordination center, exchanges of information on planned military maneuvers, the establishment of mechanisms to handle aerial and maritime accidents which occur in hostile territory, and the creation of "regional trust" through overt diplomatic steps. The Israeli delegation to the talks presented several working papers dealing with ways to implement the confidence-building measures, as well as a document detailing Israel's conception of the long-term goals of the process of arms control and regional security in the Middle East.

At the opening of the talks, the Israeli delegation, headed by Defense Ministry Director General David 'Ivri, protested the absence of several countries from the region, especially Syria and Libya. On the other hand, the Israelis welcomed the Palestinian delegation to the working group. It is participating in the discussions for the first time. Israeli sources reported that at the outset of the talks, the Palestinian delegation submitted a working paper with points for discussion within the framework of the bilateral negotiations.

The contents of the Palestinian working paper were not published, but a press statement by the delegation revealed several tough positions. Among other things, the Palestinian statement linked the need to establish a Palestinian state, a halt to human rights violations in the territories, and the beginning of a dialogue with the PLO with the aim of the working group's discussions: the reduced danger of military escalation in the Middle East, together with regional arms control.

The Palestinian statement expressed fear about the "destabilizing ramifications of the Israeli nuclear weapons plan." The statement claimed that the plan "continues to constitute one of the most glaring threats" to regional peace. The Palestinians issued a call to turn the Middle East "into a region free from weapons of mass destruction" and, on the more immediate level, urged all warring parties in the region to join the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, which Israel has not signed.

[Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew on 20 May in a page 10 report by Ron Ben-Yishay reports that "yesterday, Israel and several Arab countries submitted detailed documents with their conception of 'the vision of regional security arrangements' in the Middle East.

["These are the major points in the Israeli document:

["—The goal of the negotiations is to attain relations of full peace between all the countries in the region.

["—Peace will comprise normalization of relations and open borders between all the countries.

["—The quantities of weapons and the size of the army of each country in the region will be limited to the minimum required for its defense.

["—After peace is established according to the aforementioned principles, Israel will work together with the other countries in the region to eliminate all nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons from the Middle East.

["—The next round of talks on regional security will be held in September, apparently in Moscow.

["David 'Ivri, the director general of the Defense Ministry, who also heads the Israeli delegation to the negotiations, yesterday noted the businesslike atmosphere at the talks, which focused on the U.S. proposal for a mechanism of 'confidence-building measures' that will reduce the threat of hostilities in the region.

["Eytan Bentzur, the Foreign Ministry's representative on the Israeli delegation, said that he expected progress on this track to be faster than on the others."]

Boycott on Multilateral Talks Over Water Lifted

TA1805154993 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 18 May 93 p 2

[By Da'ud Kuttab]

[Excerpt] Jerusalem—Dr. Hasan Abu-Libdah, deputy head of the negotiating delegation's technical committees, has said that the obstacles which led the Palestinian side to boycott all official and scientific meetings and conferences over the issue of water were recently overcome. The Americans will be officially informed of this after most of the parties concerned had been informed.

AL-QUDS has learned from an informed source in the Palestinian delegation decided to lift the boycott after the modifications demanded by the Palestinians concerning the water committee's recommendations were carried out.

The modifications were made at the sidelines of the refugees committee which was held in Oslo and attended by Dr. Abu-Libdah, who returned recently to the country. [passage omitted]

Inter-Arab Affairs

'Abd-al-Majid Calls For Arab Peacekeeping Force

NC1905154593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1335 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 May (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid has called for developing a new vision of pan-Arab security based on local resources and involving the setting up of Arab peacekeeping forces.

Speaking to AL-MUSAWWAR magazine in its Friday, 21 May, issue, 'Abd-al-Majid disclosed that he has set up a committee under his chairmanship to study this matter. The committee will meet in the near future to prepare a final report on the matter and submit it to Arab states, he said.

'Abd-al-Majid expressed his willingness to make all necessary effort to clarify the Arab atmosphere. He suggested that candidness among Arabs is a good starting point toward reconciliation. He referred to the efforts the Arab League made in this context when it sent messages to Arab leaders in March and formed a tripartite committee made up of Egypt, Morocco, and Mauritania, in addition to himself, to make contacts with Arab states. He remarked that the points of agreement are more than the points of difference.

Touching on the Arab boycott of Israel, 'Abd-al-Majid remarked that the boycott will continue as long as there is war. However, he added, if certain Arab states favor curbing these restrictions, the matter will be one of sovereignty. We are not above the states, and once peace is established the boycott will naturally end, 'Abd-al-Majid said.

The secretary general appealed to the UN Security Council to respond to the Arab and Muslim demand to permit Libyan pilgrims to use planes to perform their hajj. He noted that the issue makes Arabs bitter, because they see the Council's resolutions being applied to some states out of all the others.

He expressed the hope that the Libyan problem with the West will be resolved peacefully, because it involves legal, psychological, and political aspects.

'Abd-al-Majid remarked that the lifting of the blockade imposed on Iraq depends on Iraq's compliance with UN Security Council resolutions, which will put Iraq in a sound position from a legal point of view.

In conclusion, 'Abd-al-Majid stressed the need for Israel to comply with and refrain from violating the UN resolutions. He reiterated that the world should apply standard procedures to all states.

Popular Forces Delegation To Visit Egypt, Sudan, Yemen

JN1805155993 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1500 GMT 18 May 93

[Text] A delegation representing the Arab Popular Forces Conference [APFC] will begin an Arab tour today to enhance Arab solidarity. The first leg of the trip will include Egypt, Sudan, and Yemen.

Sa'd Qasim Hammudi, secretary general of the APFC and head of the delegation, said at a news conference in Amman today that the 20-member delegation, drawn from parliaments and trade unions in 10 Arab states, will arrive in Cairo today. The delegation, he added, will meet with Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, secretary general of the Arab League, and several Egyptian Government officials, as well as leaders of Egyptian trade unions and parties.

The delegation will discuss with these officials, he noted, means of enhancing Arab solidarity on the basis of pan-Arab principles grounded in Arab constants. The delegation will also review current Arab issues with these officials.

Palestinian Affairs

U.S. Envoys To Arrive in Region Within 10 Days

TA1905152193 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 19 May 93 p 1

["Exclusive" report]

[Text] Ramallah—'Azmi al-Shu'aybi, member of the Palestinian negotiating team's leadership, told our correspondent yesterday that the dialogue with the U.S. Administration is continuing over some issues relating to an agreement on a principles document as well as human rights in the occupied territories.

Al-Shu'aybi affirmed that the U.S. Administration has expressed its readiness to dispatch envoys to the region to wrap up the dialogue with the Israeli and Palestinian parties. He added that the envoys are expected to arrive in the occupied territories within the next 10 days.

Al-Shu'aybi said that the issues under discussion will be: Lifting the military siege over Jerusalem, release of detainees, family reunification, stopping the policy of demolishing unlicensed houses, and repatriation of the Marj al-Zuhur deportees.

Al-Shu'aybi expects that at the end of the envoys' visit, a new invitation will be extended to the Palestinian side to conclude the dialogue with the U.S. Administration before the upcoming round.

Christopher Remark on Waning U.S. Patience Criticized

JN1905203493 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 May 93

[Unattributed talk]

[Text] Brothers: For Secretary of State Warren Christopher to declare that U.S. patience with the Middle East peace process is wearing thin, and that his country cannot pursue the process alone without the parties involved adjusting their positions, is as ridiculous as it is objectionable.

It is unfortunate that the United States should discuss the fate of the peace process in generalities so as to throw dust in the eyes and conceal the truth about U.S. support for and partiality toward Israel's intransigent policies. Talking about the promised peace without seriously addressing the roots of the conflict is lopsided logic. The roots of the conflict are Israel's occupation of Arab territories and its routine, undeterred, and unscrupulous abuse of Arab and Palestinian rights.

It would have been more worthwhile for Warren Christopher to restate his country's protestations over the illegality of occupation and Jewish settlements in the occupied Arab territories. Warren Christopher might have decided to be on the same wavelength as his country's public position and thus announce that U.S. patience is wearing thin over the daily outrages committed by Israeli troops against our people, who are holding their ground in the occupied territories.

If we are to believe that Warren Christopher and his nation are really concerned for human rights, the United States should stop disrupting attempts to secure international protection for the Palestinian people living under occupation. Is it necessary that the slaughter of the Palestinian people continues while the international community stands by, unmoved by any scruples? A U.S. attempt to check these Israeli outrages would mean the United States is truly committed to the UN Charter and conventions. The nation that has set itself up as sponsor of the peace process might have taken notice of the daily abuses against the Palestinians. The United States must share the blame for these outrages, notwithstanding the tears it is shedding over the fate of the peace process—that is if it really wants to promote a just and general peace settlement with provisions for Palestinian rights. It may be said that Christopher, having remained tight-lipped for quite a while, at long last uttered a blasphemy. The United States should at least have maintained a balanced perspective and not lost sight of the key requirements for Middle East peace—a peace that can only be attained on Palestinian terms: A Palestinian state with Jerusalem as its capital.

PLO's Abu-Mazin Cited on Peace Talks, U.S. Role

PM1905162593 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 May 93 p 3

[Sawsan Abu-Husayn report: "Musa and al-Baz Meet With Abu-Mazin in Preparation for 'Arafat Visit; Mubarak to Raise Possibilities of Resuming Gulf Relations With PLO"]

[Excerpts] Cairo—Palestinian President Yasir 'Arafat will arrive in Cairo within hours to meet with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak to assess the results of the ninth round of Arab-Israeli negotiations.

President Mubarak will brief 'Arafat on the results of his Gulf tour, especially with regard to the possibility of resuming Gulf relations with and financial aid to the PLO. These relations have witnessed tension since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, "Abu-Mazin," has said that the Egyptian-Palestinian summit will discuss the Palestinian demands with respect to the U.S. Clinton administration and the possibility of resuming the U.S.-Palestinian dialogue. [passage omitted]

AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT has learned that earnest Egyptian-U.S. contacts are being made to resume the dialogue with the PLO, and that these contacts will result soon in the arrangement of a Palestinian-U.S. meeting in Cairo at ambassador level as a first step toward moving the dialogue to Tunis. [passage omitted]

Abu-Mazin praised the U.S. role, describing it as better than in the past, even though it does not yet meet Palestinian aspirations, which consist in the belief that it is important to put pressure on the Israelis to get them take steps that will shorten the peace process and spare everyone the job of going into formal details which could from time to time threaten the continuation of the negotiations.

On the proposed Palestinian amendments concerning self-rule, he emphasized that the Palestinian side had submitted its ideas in this connection through an action framework at the end of the second week of the ninth round. [passage omitted]

He said that the PLO has called for convening a five-way meeting in Jordan within days to coordinate before the 10th round resumes. He denied reports about an expected meeting between Peres and [PLO Political Department Head] Faruq Qaddumi. He expressed his astonishment at reports that an alternative Palestinian leadership to 'Arafat is being looked for and that Faysal al-Husayni is a candidate. Asked about efforts being made by King Hassan II to arrange a meeting between Rabin and 'Arafat, he stressed that the PLO does not object to such a meeting and that it has on several occasions expressed its wishes in this connection.

Asked about the convening of the Palestine National Council, he emphasized that such a meeting will not be held in the near future, that it is on the cards to think about it, but we are in the process of arranging a meeting for the PLO Central Council to discuss all Palestinian issues, including the issue of developments in the peace process.

Negotiator Wants U.S. To Adopt 'Less Biased' Stand

LD2005091793 Rabat Moroccan Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 0700 GMT 20 May 93

[Telephone interview with Faysal al-Husayni, member of the Palestinian delegation to the Mideast peace talks, by unidentified correspondent—live]

[Excerpt] [Correspondent] Mr. al-Husayni, preparations are currently underway for a meeting of the Arab cordon countries in Amman to assess the outcome of the latest round of the Arab-Israeli peace talks. Could you comment on the outcome of those talks, which were held over a period of three weeks in Washington?

[Al-Husayni] We initially thought that there was a new atmosphere that would advance these talks and achieve some progress. That atmosphere, which did reign over the negotiations during the first few days, was ended by certain Israeli stances that reverted to the old style of procrastination and postponement. That subsequently led to the breakdown of the talks.

[Correspondent] Clashes between the Israeli occupation forces and the Palestinians in the occupied territories have escalated. The Israeli Government, through Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, has recently announced that dealing with the Palestinians will take a different course. How do you view the deteriorating conditions in the occupied territories and their repercussions on the peace process?

[Al-Husayni] Israel initiated the escalation at the outset of the negotiations. When the new negotiations were launched, 30 deportees were repatriated and the Palestinian public began to anticipate some sort of progress and detente in the general situation. Israel began the escalation by isolating the West Bank and Gaza Strip—and by isolating Jerusalem from both—by undertaking operations of a violent nature, by increasing the killing and wounding, and by blowing up houses. All those things led to an escalation in the situation. It was natural that the Palestinians responded.

[Correspondent] Mr. al-Husayni, to what extent is the United States, in the shadow of the new administration, committed to its promises that this year will be a year of peace?

[Al-Husayni] We expected the negotiations to be lengthy and arduous. At the same time, we believed they had to move a few steps forward even in that long and arduous direction. However, for matters to regress, we all find that disconcerting.

[Correspondent] Although the peace process was launched at the Madrid Conference one and a half years ago, no progress worth mentioning has been achieved in the bilaterals. Do you think that what is required is an Arab decision at a summit level, and how are the Palestinians going to achieve that purpose?

[Al-Husayni] I believe we are very much in need of such a unified decision. One of the reasons that led the PLO to go to the ninth round was the feeling that there was an Arab detente and that there was a possibility for a unified Arab stance. That was the purpose. The Palestinian objective is a unified Arab agreement or stance that could lead to a stronger position at the negotiations liable to secure a better Arab future in the region.

[Correspondent] Let me return to the ninth round of talks. As a sponsor, the United States had pledged to play the role of full partner in the talks. Did that really materialize?

[Al-Husayni] If we look at the topic from the angle of the project proposed by the United States, there is no doubt the picture is pessimistic because we cannot say that this was the required start we had hoped for from the United States as a full partner in the negotiations. In any case, it is now perfectly clear to the United States that this beginning was not adequate and that, should it really want to be a full partner and to achieve positive results in the region, it has to adopt a different stance that is less biased and more serious. [passage omitted]

Mahmud 'Abbas on Peace, Palestinian Stand

JN2005100393 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 20 May 93 p 18

[Interview with PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas by Tawfiq 'Abid—place and date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-DUSTUR] The U.S. Administration has promised to play an honest full-partner role in the negotiations. How do you assess this role during the ninth round, and do you expect an active U.S. role in the 10th round?

['Abbas] The expression honest full partner has relative connotations. When we interpret these words, we should not rely on good intentions. The U.S. performance during the ninth round was not commensurate with our interpretation of this role. The United States is totally biased toward Israel. We should do a lot on the Arab and international levels to convince the United States that its bias toward Israel will never make true peace in the region.

[AL-DUSTUR] Opinions were almost unanimous that major issues were not discussed during the ninth round.

So, is there any point in going to the 10th round while the issues of Jerusalem and the geographical mandate are still pending?

['Abbas] Negotiations were basically designed to discuss pending issues. There are several issues on which no progress was made, these are besides the issues of Jerusalem and the geographical mandate. Here I can review our negotiating position as follows:

We will not relinquish our rights that are recognized by international legitimacy. There must be clear Palestinian sovereignty over all Palestinian territories occupied in 1967, and Jerusalem is an integral part of these territories.

Transitional phase arrangements, called the Palestinian self-rule phase, must in no way affect the final solution which guarantees full Palestinian national rights and sovereignty over man and land. We are negotiating within this framework, and these negotiations will be long and complicated. Conflict over territory will continue until right prevails.

[AL-DUSTUR] What is new in the Palestinian-U.S. talks and contacts regarding the declaration of principles?

['Abbas] There is nothing new after the end of the ninth round of talks.

[AL-DUSTUR] There is very little information about the Palestinian plan which was presented in reply to the Israeli plan. What are the most important points of that plan?

['Abbas] I do not have the right to officially publish our plan, which was drafted on the basis of our understanding of our national interests, the spirit of the invitation to the Madrid conference, the resolutions of international legitimacy, and strict adherence to the principle of land for peace. [passage omitted]

[AL-DUSTUR] What are the causes behind the failure of the ninth round, particularly on the Palestinian track? How can one guarantee that the same thing will not happen again in the tenth round?

['Abbas] I see a difference between the words "lack of progress" and "failure." The lack of results in the ninth round was basically due to the fact that Israel was unprepared to make the substantial concessions it has to make to help achieve progress and success. The Israeli Government still has the illusion that it can force the Palestinians and Arabs to make concessions, and with such a logic, there will be no progress. Furthermore, the U.S. side has not done what it should to seriously pressure Israel to make steps that agree with the U.S. position itself. No one can guarantee there will be progress in any round, but we must work to achieve that progress. I think there is still room for a planned, integrated, and persistent Palestinian and Arab effort. [passage omitted]

[AL-DUSTUR] What were the most important points you raised with the Egyptian officials, and will there be a new role for Egypt following Dr. al-Baz visit to the United States?

['Abbas] We always consult with the brothers in Egypt because they are at the heart of the political process and they are our partners in the broader Arab coordination. Naturally, we hold discussions with them. They played an active role in dealing with the crisis of not going to the ninth round. In any case, there has to be coordination with Egypt.

Regarding Dr. al-Baz visit to the United States, it will certainly be important. The visit will give the U.S. Administration a view of the situation and al-Baz will undoubtedly take into account our views and concepts, as well as those of our Arab brothers.

Commentary Views Failure of Ninth Round of Peace Talks

LD1905204493 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 19 May 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Brothers, there is a great difference between the soft quiet diplomatic language which is used at the peace negotiations and the harsh language which is used in addressing the citizens of the occupied soil by way of the measures that had been adopted or to be adopted to by-pass the resolution 799 which had called for the repatriation of the deportees from Marj Zuhur, as well as the rise in the number of victims. Not only this but also there are instances like closures, sieges and making Jerusalem a city out of bounds to its human depth in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

The difference between the two diplomatic and real languages has not been accompanied by a change in kind to the peace process. Such a change requires the existence of a practical harmony between theory and practice within the framework of the earnest and sincere intentions to realize peace. Without a real, earnest, and sincere desire, the negotiations will remain governed by the logic of maneuvering and evading the consequences of a peaceful settlement. The first of these is to acknowledge that the Palestinian people are humans and they have full and inalienable rights and that they are people who form one of the nations of the world.

There is no doubt that the practical failure of the ninth round of negotiations despite all the promises and hopes that had been pinned on it, also the escalation of the measures, has resulted in a double frustration on the part of the Palestinian people who were hoping the opposite would happen when they agreed to return to the negotiations regardless of the pressures which had been exerted on them to make them agree to attend.

The question now is this: Is it logical or fair that the Palestinians should be rewarded in this way after they

went once again to the negotiations. What would have been the result if they had refused to participate in the talks or had persisted in refusing to go despite the temptations, the undertakings, and the guarantees that America and Israel were competing with each other to offer to the Palestinians at that time to make them participate in the ninth round?

However, as soon as they said yes, the methods used in dealing with them were turned upside down. What is it that the Palestinians are required to do before they can expect the Israeli and American sides to meet with them on the basis of dialogue and identical procedure—procedure which springs from a genuine and sincere desire to make peace?

'Arafat Urges Hamas To Cut Ties With Iran

NC1905123893 Paris AFP in English 1149 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, May 19 (AFP)—PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat has urged the Palestinian Muslim fundamentalist group Hamas to cut links with Iran, saying he rejected external interference in Palestinian affairs. "We opened our hearts for them and admitted Hamas members into the Palestine National Council (parliament) in 1988," said Arafat in an interview with the United Arab Emirates magazine AL-SHURUQ ahead of publication Thursday. "But afterwards, a non-Arab wind, which is the Iranian wind, entered them. What I want to say is that I hope my brothers will be Palestinian Muslims not Muslims associated with Iran." Palestine Liberation Organisation activists have often clashed with Hamas in a bid to curtail its growing influence in the Israeli-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip. "We reject interference in our internal affairs, whether it be Arab or foreign interference," 'Arafat said. "Our revolution is not submitted to anyone and is directed only by the will of the Palestinian people." Iran has been accused of financing Hamas and other Muslim fundamentalist groups in the Arab world.

'Secret Agreement' Between Hamas and Iran Denied

PM1905115693 London AL-WASAT in Arabic 17-23 May 93 pp 8, 9

[Unattributed report: "Ghawshah Tells AL-WASAT: Hamas Concluded No Agreement With Iran"]

[Text] PLO sources leaked to some Arab and foreign newspapers and news agencies the text of an agreement they said was reached between the Iranian Government and Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] leadership at the end of 1992 and in which Iran addressed Hamas as the "sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people's jihad."

Under the agreement Hamas is entitled to "receive sufficient material, moral, political, and jihad support to enable it to continue its jihad mission and escalate the confrontations with the Zionists." The secret agreement was signed in the Salah Iyad [as transliterated] camp in the Iranian city of Qom between a Hamas delegation headed by Ibrahim Ghawshah and Iranian officials whose names were not revealed. The agreement said that "Islam is the solution to all problems; the so-called PLO and its leadership are the opposite of Islamic action; and it, its programs, political line, and conspiracies against Muslims' unity must be confronted."

The agreement condemned "the PLO's acts of murder and non-Islamic and immoral practices against struggling forces in the Gaza Strip and other occupied areas. (PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat) must realize that negotiations with the Jews cannot be concealed by these actions against Muslims."

Iran and Hamas expressed their "rejection of the autonomy negotiations, the U.S.-Zionist election plan, and the present negotiations and any results they may produce, especially those aimed at recognizing the Zionist entity." The agreement called for the strengthening of relations with Syria and stipulated practical measures, especially "the election of a new leadership (for the Palestinian people) that achieves their aspirations and national and Islamic aims after the PLO's and its leadership's failure to achieve these aims."

The agreement said that "the continued enforcement of the Camp David treaty is the cause of the Islamic nation's problems and tension and the fragmentation of its unity." It stipulated that "fighting Israel, rejecting peace with the Jews, and nonrecognition of the Zionist entity's existence and legitimacy are the basis for concurrence between the two sides and any Arab or Islamic side that joins them."

Commenting on this, Engineer Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for Hamas, confirmed to AL-WASAT that he visited Tehran in October 1992 with an official delegation headed by Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, head of the movement's Political Bureau. Ghawshah told AL-WASAT that the delegation, which included Eng. 'Imad al-'Alami, the movement's representative in Tehran, and Muhammad Nazzal, Hamas representative in Jordan, "concluded no agreements with the Iranian Government, neither in Qom nor anywhere else."

Ghawshah pointed out that the aim of the visit, which was made at the invitation of the Iranian Foreign Ministry, was to discuss ways of supporting the Palestinian intifadah and assessing the peace negotiations and the results of the conference for supporting the intifadah held in Tehran at the end of 1991.

Eng. Ghawshah denied that Hamas could have concluded an agreement to replace the PLO, the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. He said that what was reported about Iran's description of Hamas as "the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people's jihad" during the visit is "idle talk."

Ghawshah stressed to AL-WASAT that he has never in his life visited the Iranian city of Qom, nor has he ever heard of the Salah Iyad camp near Qom.

Answering a question put to him by AL-WASAT, Ghawshah pointed out that the Hamas delegation's visit to Tehran in that period lasted no more than four days, and that he made no other visit later. He denied that Hamas as a movement is receiving its instructions from Tehran or any other state. He went on: "We visited Tehran and are willing to visit any country that expresses sympathy toward our cause and the Palestinian people's jihad."

UNLI Cancels General Strike Slated for 20 May

TA1905131393 Jerusalem AL-FAJR in Arabic 19 May 93 p 1

[Text] Jerusalem—The Unified National Leadership of the Intifadah [UNLI] announced yesterday the cancellation of the general strike that it had called for tomorrow, 20 May. In a special addendum to call no. 94, the UNLI called for opening offices and shops on this day, as usual.

The UNLI decision comes in response to the complaint of many political and popular forces against the strike phenomenon, which has become a burden on the residents.

The statement affirmed that the UNLI was the only leading national party authorized to declare general strike days and that anything issued by any other party was not binding on the masses.

The UNLI explained that its decision came "in view of the living conditions of our Palestinian masses in the occupied territories stemming from a series of inhuman measures adopted by Rabin's government, the last of which was the imposition of a total military siege on our holy city, Jerusalem, and the occupied territories." The UNLI considered this step as "seeking basically to strike at the Palestinian economic infrastructure and, ultimately, to starve the masses of our people and through this policy push them toward capitulation."

In a related development, the UNLI called for "opening a comprehensive national dialogue devoid of any form of organized fanaticism and for mobilizing all militant potentials and capabilities in the service of national action."

Intifadah Committees Confirm 20 May for Strike

JN1905185093 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] The popular and national committees of the revolutionary intifadah have confirmed their call for a general strike tomorrow, Thursday, 20 May 1993. This came in an explanatory statement they issued today. The statement says: At a time when the Zionist campaign of oppression against our people is escalating in a desperate attempt to quell the glorious intifadah and to force our people to bow to Zionist-imperialist designs and relinquish their national rights, suspect plans are escalating to harm our people's unity and their rallying around their legitimate leadership.

The statement adds: In this context, some local newspapers reported an addendum issued by the popular and national committees of the intifadah urging the cancellation of the strike scheduled for tomorrow. While they assert that they have no knowledge of such an addendum; that they have not declared any position other than the content of the call, they affirm that tomorrow, Thursday, 20 May 1993, will be a day of general strike; and that they call on all the sons of our people to be cautious in dealing with every attempt to harm our people's unity and their rallying around the popular and national committees of the revolutionary intifadah.

'Arafat Stresses Resolve To Not 'Forsake' Jerusalem

JN1905184293 Baghdad Voice of the PLO in Arabic 1600 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Brother leader Chairman Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] has emphasized that none of us will forsake Jerusalem or a single grain of its soil. We will not kneel as we face the blockade, hunger, and repression to which the occupied Palestinian territories are being subjected.

Addressing the opening session of the Central Council of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front, Abu-'Ammar stressed: We are the only delegation that at once negotiates and fights on all fronts. These negotiations add up to a political battle we are waging with supreme confidence and iron willpower in the manner the Algerians and Vietnamese talked and fought at the same time.

The brother leader Chairman Abu-'Ammar hailed the brother strugglers of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front as a key faction of the PLO. Together and side by side with our hands joined together, we will march until a young fighter of the new generals [his customary reference to intifadah children], who are throwing hallowed rocks at aircraft and tanks, hoists the flag of Palestine—the flag of the Arab nation—atop the minarets and church steeples of Jerusalem, the capital of the state of Palestine.

Algeria

Blida Provincial Official Wounded in Attack

LD1905011693 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 2200 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Three men have attempted to assassinate the head of the executive delegation of Tessal el-Mardja municipality in Blida Province. According to a source close to provincial security authorities, the victim was wounded and immediately taken to the hospital, while the armed men fled in a Renault. They had in their possession a Beretta pistol and a hunting rifle.

Group 'Conspiring Against State Security' Sentenced

LD2005082693 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] The Oran judicial council has finished trying a group involved in possessing arms and conspiring against state security. Memouna Naghli reports from Oran:

[Memouna] After closing the arguments, the special court body, which is subordinate to the Oran judicial council, withdrew to issue sentence on the persons accused of forming an armed group, possessing fire arms without a license, conspiring against the state authority and security, and hiding and giving shelter to a first lieutenant who had deserted.

The sentences are: 15 years imprisonment for Ousmani Sidi Mohamed, 10 years imprisonment for Ghalmoum Taib and Bennasir Ghaouti, 5 years imprisonment for four accused, 7 years imprisonment for one accused, and 3 years for two other accused. Five of the accused—Benkasim Karim, Walha Abdelkarim, Saad Saoud Ahmed, Hannani Benmousa, and Shanioun Taib—were acquitted.

In addition to the prison sentences, the court also ordered the confiscation of the accused's possessions.

After passing the sentences, the chairman of the judicial council reminded the accused that, with the exception of those who have been acquitted, the others can, within eight days, appeal against the sentences passed on them before the Supreme Court.

Culture Minister Interviewed on Terrorism, Iran

NC2005070393 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0510 GMT 20 May 93

[Telephone interview with Algerian Culture and Communications Minister Habib Hamraoui, in Algiers, by Fawzi al-Jundi, in Cairo; carried on the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Excerpts] [Al-Jundi] Welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Hamraoui] Welcome to you and the Voice of the Arabs listeners.

[Al-Jundi] Let us begin our dialogue with a discussion on the need for a unified Arab concept about firmly confronting terrorism.

[Hamraoui] First, we must realize that terrorism is not directed against Algeria and Egypt alone. We believe it is a conspiracy against the entire Arab and Islamic world. It is necessary to have a serious awareness of this dangerous phenomenon that has spread through our Arab-Islamic world at a time when other cultures are opening up broader future prospects for themselves. We need to unite Arab-Islamic efforts, foster collective awareness of the issue, and cooperate in erecting a fortress that will protect us from falling into the terrorist embrace. Terrorism does not merely affect governments and capitals, but the heart of culture and distorts the splendid image of tolerant, fraternal, benevolent Islam. [passage omitted]

[Al-Jundi] Mr. Hamraoui, how can we clip the claws of the terrorist hirelings who serve the interests of Tehran's rulers?

[Hamraoui] We must first reveal the facts to our people. We cannot, in the name of diplomacy or fraternity, conceal the danger that this capital poses to our countries. We do not want to show hatred toward Iran, but we must show dissatisfaction and complete rejection of the Iranian regime's policy toward us. This is why we say that we will be in harmony with the Iranian people but we will not allow individuals and groups to attack our countries and Arab- Islamic culture. The first step is to give the facts to our people, including our people in Iran. We also must say that such acts do not serve Islam or Muslims anywhere. We must also have prompt and collective Arab and Islamic action to tame those groups, which attack the core of our Arab-Islamic culture. [passage omitted]

Foreign Minister Begins U.S. Visit 19 May

LD1905202093 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] A Foreign Ministry communique said that Reda Malek, member of the Higher State Council and foreign affairs minister today began a visit to the United States where he will hold talks with Secretary of State Warren Christopher. The communique added that Reda Malek will also meet with several figures from the U.S. Administration and Congress and representatives of influential university circles. The communique said that the visit, the first of its kind since the new administration came into office, is part of the conventional relations of cooperation between Algeria and the United States. It concluded that the visit will allow the two countries' officials to exchange views on regional and international issues of common interest.

Egypt

Further Reportage on Visit of UK Minister of State

Hogg Meets Foreign Minister

NC1905142293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1200 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa met today with Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs. The meeting was attended by Christopher Long, Britain's ambassador to Egypt.

Speaking after the meeting, Hogg said that they had reviewed a number of issues of common interest, developments in the Middle East, the various tracks of the peace talks, and the situations in the Gulf and Bosnia-Herzegovina. He added that he had told the British minister that the EC's stand on Bosnia-Herzegovina needs much progress and development.

In response to a question on the Libyan-Western crisis, the British minister pointed out that this subject was not discussed with the foreign minister, but with Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, with whom he talked about ways to persuade the Libyan Government to hand over the suspects to stand trial, in accordance with the Security Council resolution. The British minister underlined the importance of a response from the Libyan side to the Security Council resolution, which means handing over the suspects to be tried by the Scottish judiciary.

Comments on Bosnia, Lockerbie

NC1905144093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1314 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 May (MENA)—Arab League Secretary General Dr. 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid conferred today with Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs, who is currently visiting Cairo.

Hogg said after the meeting that his talks with Dr. 'Abd-al-Majid had dealt with the situation in Iraq and the sanctions on Libya. He added: We want the Libyan Government to comply with the Security Council resolutions and we believe it is important for the [Lockerbie] suspects to stand trial in Scotland or on U.S. territory, and this has been our position for the past 18 months.

On Libya's proposal that the suspects be tried before a neutral international judicial panel, Hogg said: We discussed this matter before and we believe that it involves complicated elements which we cannot accept. We believe that these suspects must be tried in accordance with the rules of a Scottish court, and there will be no exception to this.

Asked about the U.S.-Russian dispute regarding a military intervention in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the British minister said: We are interested in the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the bloody conflict involving Muslims there. This is why the British Government has sent troops to try and resolve the conflict there and secure the arrival of food supplies to the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Hogg said he hoped that the Bosnian and Serbian parties would respond to the peace plan drafted by Cyrus Vance and David Owen, adding: We believe it is necessary that the matter be handled in this manner.

Asked if Britain supports military intervention in Bosnia, Hogg said: We do not see any prospects for putting the peace agreement into effect unless there is a military force compelling the two sides to respect peace. Therefore, he added, Britain supports the use of aircraft to hit specific Serbian targets so long as this will lead to certain goals, and we hope that the European parties will go along with us.

Asked if the precedent of the U.S.-Western military intervention during the Kuwait crisis could be repeated in Bosnia, Hogg said that there are clear differences between the two cases. In the case of Kuwait, he added, there was an invasion by a neighboring country, that is, Iraq. According to our declared position at the time, our intervention sought to force Iraq out of Kuwait. But the problem in Bosnia is different. The situation there is a religious and ethnic conflict and is merely a civil war, and it is hard to use military force there as in the case of Kuwait.

On the Damascus Declaration signed by Egypt, Syria, and the Arab Gulf states, Hogg said that it is important for the Gulf states as well as Egypt and Syria to try to establish more effective procedures to find security arrangements, adding that Britain encouraged this approach from the start and there has not been any significant development since then. He noted that Britain cannot tell the people in the region how to run their affairs because they are already trying to do so, but so far no effective security arrangements have been made.

Asked about British Prime Minister John Major's meeting with writer Salman Rushdie, Hogg said that the meeting demonstrated the fact that Rushdie is a British subject who enjoys all his rights. He added: We understand the Muslims' sense of disapproval over what Rushdie has written, but he is a British subject.

On the peace talks, particularly as far as the Syrian position is concerned, Hogg said: We want to see progress in the Syrian-Israeli track and we want a comprehensible definition of what the Syrians mean by peace vis-a-vis Israel's desire for withdrawal. We want to see tangible steps toward achieving effective peace between Syria and Israel.

Departs 20 May

NC2005082593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0749 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 May (MENA)—Douglas Hogg, British minister of state for foreign and Commonwealth affairs, left Cairo for the United Kingdom today at the end of a three-day visit. Hogg held talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa and other senior Egyptian officials on the Middle East peace process and issues of mutual interest. He also chaired the meeting of British ambassadors accredited to Middle Eastern countries in Cairo on 18 May.

Musa Denies Recruitment of Sudanese National

NC1805144793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1334 GMT 18 May 93

[Text] Cairo, 18 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has denied Sudanese claims that Egypt detained a Sudanese national and recruited him to harm Sudan. Commenting on the issue today, he said that these accusations are groundless and are part of the continued farce that Sudan began by accusing Egypt of engineering a coup and followed up by making successive claims through certain Sudanese circles. He said that continuing this farce of Sudanese claims will only affirm that there are unsound political goals aimed at destroying rather than building bridges. He voiced hope that the Sudanese authorities will return to their senses.

Message Sent to Israel To Advance Peace Process

NC1905132293 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1205 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 May (MENA)—Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa has announced that Egypt sent a message to the Israeli Government yesterday to take positive steps to advance the peace process so that the next stage of the peace negotiations will be conducted with more ease.

Musa said Jordanian Foreign Minister Kamil Abu-Jabir phoned him yesterday and that it was agreed that the five countries concerned with the Middle East crisis would meet in Jordan at the end of the month to assess the outcome of the peace talks' ninth round. He said a date for the meeting will be fixed later.

'Strict Extremists' Said Planning Overthrow Detained

NC1905192493 London MBC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 May 93

[Mu'tazz al-Dimirdash report from Cairo]

[Excerpt] Egyptian security sources today stated that 822 persons who set up a new organization for strict extremists have been detained. The sources added that the State Security Prosecution has launched an investigation.

The same sources stated that the majority of the leaders of the new organization, called Vanguards of the New Jihad [tala'i' al- jihad al-jadid], are cultured persons and professors at Egyptian higher institutes and universities.

According to security sources, the organization sought to develop cadres among university students and professors and workers to support their goal of overthrowing the regime. It has not yet been determined whether the members planned to use violence to realize their goals, similar to other religious extremist groups. [passage omitted]

Trial Set for 'Vanguard' Detainees

NC1905202093 Paris AFP in English 1958 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Cairo, May 19 (AFP)—Egyptian authorities are preparing indictments for two legal proceedings involving some 700 Muslim militants who could stand trial early next month, lawyers for some of the defendants said Wednesday.

The fundamentalists—including for the first time at least ten active duty and several young reserve army officers—were arrested in January and February.

They are charged with establishing the outlawed Islamic Conquest Vanguard and New Jihad movements, which are bent on overthrowing the government of President Husni Mubarak, and with illegal arms possession.

The state security prosecutor's office, a body set up in line with the emergency laws implemented after the 1981 assassination of president Anwar al-Sadat, is preparing the indictments, the sources said.

The militants include Palestinians as well as Egyptians considered backers of the Lebanese pro-Iranian fundamentalist movement Hizballah.

The trials would be the largest in modern Egyptian history, surpassing in magnitude the revolutionary tribunals of the late president Jamal 'Abd-al-Nasir.

Either the military court or the state security's High Court will try the Muslim militants, the defense attorneys said.

Lawyer Mukhtar Nuh said the case of the active duty officers was separate from that of the other defendants and was referred to the military court.

He said the officers' families had asked for the help of attorneys but that the request had been turned down by the military prosecutor who also refused to let the lawyers review the cases.

Another lawyer, Sayyid Jadallah, said the exact number of militants could not be confirmed as the prosecution refused to provide complete information on the whole matter.

The first trial will involve militants arrested in Alexandria and the provinces of al-Buhayrah and al-Sharqiyah in the northern Nile Delta while the second trial will be devoted to people arrested in Cairo, Giza and the province of al-Qalyubiyah in the southern Delta region.

Suspects Arrested; Cassettes, Books Seized

NC1905153093 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1214 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Cairo, 19 May (MENA)—Major General Ahmad al-'Adili, assistant minister of interior and director of the General Administration of Tax and Excise Investigations, has announced that seven suspects known for extremist activities have been arrested in the cities of al-Suways and Banha in possession of 2,134 cassettes of speeches by Shaykh 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman and others with extremist inclinations.

Eleven imported video cassettes that call for inciting violence, and encroaching on heavenly religions, and 1,600 religions books by Egyptian and non-Egyptian authors whose circulation is banned by al- Azhar's Islamic Research Complex were also seized.

Al-'Adili said in his news conference today that those responsible for this activity produce and distribute cassettes of speeches by leaders of extremist religious activities inside and outside the country that incite violence and sectarian sedition.

He added that the suspects have been referred to the public prosecution for the necessary action. He explained that some of the suspects, ranging in age from 25-30, had been arrested before for extremist activities and include an engineering college graduate, a library owner, a business college student, and a driver.

Reports on New Religious Organization Denied

NC2005113793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1100 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Cairo, 20 May (MENA)—Public Security Director Major General Usamah Dabbus has denied a report carried by a Western news agency that Egyptian security services have uncovered a religious organization that propagates religious ideas among high school and university students and arrested 822 individuals who form its main cells.

In remarks appearing in AL-AHRAM AL-MASA'I newspaper today, the public security director said that the security services have not arrested individuals belonging to new religious organizations, nor have these services prevented students from taking their exams.

Maj. Gen. Dabbus asserted that such reports are designed to distort the image of Egypt's security services and its Islamic character to serve certain parties.

Sudan

Al-Bashir Comments on Recent Events With Egypt

EA1905203393 Khartoum SUNA in French 1630 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Khartoum 19 May (SUNA)—Sudan's reaction to the plot of the Egyptian regime against Sudan was calm and took into account the special nature of the eternal relations between the two countries, President 'Umar al-Bashir has said.

During a regular forum held by SUNA, President Bashir said Sudan was not afraid of the hostile maneuvers against it by the Egyptian ambassador to Khartoum. He added that investigations into those accused of the recent plot against Sudan were under way so as to reveal details of the role played by the Egyptian regime.

General 'Umar al-Bashir also said that the Egyptian Government and president were spreading allegations against Sudan on the subject of terrorism and that they had failed to come up with any related proof. He added that the Egyptian President, Husni Mubarak, during his recent visit to the Gulf states had said that he had presented proof to the heads of Gulf states on Sudan's involvement in terrorism and the existence of terrorist camps in Sudan. He said that the proof (?was) a cassette recorded at the Egyptian Embassy in Khartoum by agent Mustafa Basha, who works for Egypt.

Al-Bashir: Peace Talks 'Positive but Not as Successful'

EA1905204993 Khartoum SUNA in Arabic 1350 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Khartoum, 19 May (SUNA)—Lieutenant-General 'Umar al- Bashir, chairman of the Revolution Command Council [RCC] and the Council of Ministers, has described the peace talks between the government delegation and the principal faction of the rebel movement as positive but not as successful, as reported by information organs, because success means the signing of the peace agreement.

In a SUNA forum today, his excellency said that most Western circles have their own agenda and dramas concerning the results of the negotiations. He said this is clear to the government because for these circles if an agreement is signed between the two sides which includes Islamic shari'ah, in their view, the talks have failed because their objective is to abolish Islamic shari'ah and perhaps Sudan's firm stand (?towards) the question.

Lt-Gen. al-Bashir said all the evidence after the Entebbe, Uganda, meeting indicated the genuine interest of the rebels and the government to reach peace, and that the informal meetings which took place before Abuja-II also indicated a trend that the latest Abuja talks would reach a peace solution.

Lt-Gen. al-Bashir said that there were international, regional, and local forces determined to ensure that peace was not achieved. He also spoke about the role of these forces in directing the process of the negotiations. His excellency added that the direct talks between the government and the rebel movement had taken place, and there were open sittings which confirmed to the government delegation the desire of the military commanders in the [Sudanese People's Liberation] movement to arrive at peace.

Lt-Gen. al-Bashir said that the Sudanese Government accepted Nigeria's mediation and holding negotiations with the movement within the regional [as received] framework. His excellency pointed out that the government's delegation was commissioned to sign the peace agreement.

Country Remains Committed To Quest for Peace in Sudan

AB1905114293 Lagos Voice of Nigeria in English 1030 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Nigeria has restated her preparedness to search for peaceful resolution of the Sudanese conflict in an objective and unbiased manner, in accordance with the wishes of parties in the conflict. Dr. Tunji Olagunju, the chairman of Nigeria's mediation committee on Sudan, stated this in Abuja at the end of three weeks of dialogue by both parties in the conflict.

Dr. Olagunju said that a number of issues were agreed on during the talks. These included efforts to achieve peace through negotiation, extension of cease-fire to allow relief supply, and determination to continue negotiations on the issue of state and religion.

The conference also resolved to pursue the unity of the country, devolution of powers between the central and state governments in the Sudan, as well as the setting up of cease-fire and revenue allocation commissions. The conference has been suspended until 19th of next month to allow both parties to hold further consultations with their principals.

Opposition Says Regime Makes 'Dozens' of Arrests

NC1905133893 Paris AFP in English 1105 GMT 19 May 93

[Report by Clarisse Lucas]

[Text] Cairo, May 19 (AFP)—Sudan's military junta has made "dozens" of arrests and resumed the frequent use of torture in recent weeks, the exiled opposition has announced here.

Those arrested include several prominent people in the capital Khartoum and in the western state of Darfur, bordering on Chad and Libya, a source who asked not to be named told AFP.

In Khartoum, the detainees included Ahmad al-Mahdi, a relative of former president al-Sadiq al-Mahdi, whose elected civilian government was topped in the coup that brought General 'Umar al- Bashir to power in June 1989.

Also arrested were al-Mirghani 'Abd-al-Rahman al-Hajj Sulayman, formerly trade minister in al-Mahdi's coalition government, and doctor and trade union leader Yahya Muqwar. Both are members of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), a rival to Mahdi's Ummah party, banned like all other political movements since the coup.

The source said the three were among "several dozen" people who had been rounded up by the security services.

Five members of the Ummah party have been arrested in Darfur and are being held at al-Fashir, about 1000 kilometres (some 600 miles), from Khartoum, the source said.

They were named as Fadil Asisi, brother of former Darfur Governor Tijani Asisi, Muhammad Atim Muhammad Salamah, a former parliamentary deputy for Jabal Marrah, Yusuf Muhammad Sharaf-al-Din, director of an agricultural project at Jabal Marrah, Nasr-al-Din Tambul, a teacher, and al-Fiqi Salih, head of the state's religious affairs department.

The arrests follow the junta's announcement last month that it had uncovered a plot to overthrow it devised by the exiled opposition and the southern rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army, with logistical support from Egypt.

Nine detained suspects have been presented on Sudanese state television as among the alleged plotters.

The source said the wave of arrests has been accompanied by new and "very serious resort to torture," which had been reported to have been less systematically employed in recent months than before.

The repression, should reports here be confirmed, has been stepped up days before the expected arrival in Khartoum of a special rapporteur on Sudan mandated by the U.N. Human Rights Commission during its last session in March.

Kuwait

Two Oil Workers Reported Missing Near Iraqi Border

LD1905125793 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1203 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Kuwait, 19 May (KUNA)—A source at the Kuwaiti National Oil Company said today that two members of the company went missing on 17 May on the northern border with Iraq.

The two men who are missing are an Egyptian and an Indian who were on a prospecting mission in the Khur area in northern Kuwait, where the company intends to build a gas station to serve the UN Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission on the Iraq-Kuwait border. Fu'ad al-'Abbas, the company's local chief of sales operations, told KUNA that those who went missing are Fathi 'Abd-al-Adhim, an Egyptian building contractor, and Samuel Kuti, an Indian surveyor.

'Excellent' Results of Exercise With France Noted

LD1805192893 Kuwait KSC Television in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 May 93

[Text] In the framework of the joint defense agreement between Kuwait and the fraternal and friendly French Republic and the joint air exercise codenamed the Pearl of the West, which is being carried out at present by the Kuwaiti Air Force and the French Air Force, the operations of in-flight refuelling by the French C-160 flight refuelling tanker of French Mirage 2000 aircraft as well as Kuwaiti F-18 escort planes ended this morning. The Kuwaiti commander of the exercise praised the excellent results achieved by pilots through coordination in the joint operations and the benefit from the expertise of friendly forces which have great experience in the aviation sector.

The joint air exercise will continue until the end of this week.

Bangladesh Foreign Minister Meets Amir

BK1805155493 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 18 May 93

[Text] Bangladesh Foreign Minister Mustafizur Rahman currently visiting Kuwait called on the amir of Kuwait, Jabir al-Ahmad al-Sabah, yesterday and handed over a letter from Prime Minister Khaleda Zia. The foreign minister also called on the prime minister of Kuwait, Crown Prince Shaykh Sa'ad al-Abdallah al-Sabah, Defense Minister Shaykh al-Salim al-Sabah, and Interior Minister Shaykh Ahmad Hamud al-Jabir.

The Bangladeshi foreign minister held formal talks with the deputy prime minister and foreign minister of Kuwait. Bilateral issues, particularly matters related to increasing cooperation between the two countries, figured prominently during the talks. The Bangladeshi foreign minister reiterated the support of Bangladesh for the release of all Kuwaiti war prisoners from Iraq and full implementation of the UN resolutions.

Saudi Arabia

King Fahd, Iran's Velayati Discuss Issues

LD2005105093 Tehran IRNA in English 1022 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Mecca, May 20, IRNA—Iran's Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia Thursday exchanged views on major international issues, especially those facing the Muslim world, including situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Velayati said he conveyed President Hashemi-Rafsanjani's message to King Fahd and discussed with him bilateral relations as well as regional and international developments. He underlined multilateral cooperation between Tehran and Riyadh as an important factor serving regional stability and cooperation among Muslim states within the framework of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC).

Velayati, here for hajj rituals, further noted that the two sides explored evenues for bilateral cooperation in vital cases facing the Muslim world such as the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. He confirnmed that exchange of visits between top-level officials of the two countries would be continued in future.

The minister said that expansion of Tehran-Riyadh ties in economic areas, including oil, were among other topics discussed in the meeting.

Velayati later left here for Jeddah for talks with his Saudi counterpart Sa'ud al-Faysal. He is to leave Saudi Arabia for Oman's capital Muscat in the continuation of his tour of the Persian Gulf countries.

Human Rights Activist Discusses Group's Aims

LD1905111993 London BBC World Service in English 2100 GMT 6 May 93

[Telephone interview with Saudi human rights activist 'Abdallah Bin-Sulayman al-Masari by announcer Hugh Pryser-Jones in Riyadh on 6 May—live; from the "Newshour" program]

[Text] [Pryser-Jones] What does the new organization [Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Human Rights] intend to do and what response has it had so far to its call for Saudi's oppressed by the authorities to contact them?

[Al-Masari] The announcement is just two days old and since we don't have any media coverage in the country here inside the country, we expect that story to have no media coverage, rather a media darkening. We are getting more international response now than we are

getting locally in a response. We are hopeful in the public domain by various communications between the people themselves, through their faxes, by mouth-to-mouth information exchange that we will get very favorable response.

[Pryser-Jones] Now it sounds that you are not just interested in legitimate rights—human rights—but also in a sort of general modernization of what we would know in the West as civic society.

[Al-Masari] Yes that is one of the major aspects which we hope to achieve, but the human right aspect is the primary aspect which we would like to stress for the time being, because the other aspects of the civic society are complicated and they need also the establishment of political organization, of labor organization which is not yet in this country, so this cannot be achieved only by this committee. But the committee will concentrate on those human rights problems proper, and to follow them up in the usual classical legal fashion.

[Pryser-Jones] One of the criticisms often made by outsiders of Saudi society is that there is no due process of law, or at least it is very obscure and opaque. Is that something you are going to try to do something about?

[Al-Masari] Yes, this is one of the main intentions of this committee and other committee's working in this country, is to improve this process of law and make it transparent and to bring the administrative powers, police power under judicial control.

[Pryser-Jones] Now aren't these the sort of tasks that the new Majlis—that the Saudi king has introduced—isn't this the sort of job it should be doing?

[Al-Masari] In principle, but the problem—nothing very much has been executed until now in that direction. We hope that these general principles will be enough reason and in formulating of specific laws, but until now we have seen nothing.

[Pryser-Jones] Now, in the past, a few brave people have spoken up in Saudi Arabia, but there didn't seem to be much support among the political classes. Do you in fact think the political classes are beginning to change their mind?

[Al-Masari] Hopefully, that's what we are hoping for, and also one of the problems in the past—that some outspoken spoke as single person, not as organized groups which weakened their position. And also many of these speakers were not firmly established in the Islamic tradition of the country and not very well associated with the scholarship—the scholars and the ulema, which made them also isolated in the view of the public. This deve'opment in the last few years is now really more firmly rooted in the general public, and also supported and protected by the Islamic scholars, and also the theoretical development of their ideas is, I am convinced, completely and firmly Islamic. Our contacts and discussions and daily communication shows that there is a very broad-based acceptance of these principles and very broad- based critics to the current behavior of the state.

[Pryser-Jones] From what you have said, your supporters come from the very pinnacle of Saudi society—no better position one might think for calling for an election. Will you be doing that?

[Al-Masari] This is maybe too early for that, and maybe the situation is not the situation—not the society, it is not yet natural. Take for example Yemen; the social society is more educated, more sophisticated than the Yemeni society, nevertheless we have seen an election in Yemen which has run reasonably, there were some small excesses. OK, that happens in the human society, they were able to elect a parliament in a very reasonable and respectable fashion, and I am convinced that the Saudi society has more educated people, has more middle class structure which is more suitable for elections, that it should be here successful or even more.

Monetary Agency Releases Annual Report

LD1705205593 Riyadh SPA in English 1922 GMT 17 May 93

[Text] Riyadh, May 17, SPA—The rise of 10.8 per cent and a further increase of 9.8 per cent in the Kingdom's gross domestic product (GDP) during fiscal years 1410-11 (1990) and 1411-12 (1991) respectively, was attributed to higher growth in both the oil and the non-oil sectors, according to the latest thirtieth annual report of the Saudi Arabian Monetary Agency (SAMA).

In pursuit of the Kingdom's development objective, the report for the year 1411-12 (1992) said SAMA seeks to promote opportunities for sustainable economic growth while preserving a high degree of monetary stability.

It added SAMA continuously monitors the banking system to ensure that financial services keep up with the rapid progress of the country. Monetary and banking data reflected great improvement in banking services and the payment system and in bank performance at large to meet the expanding requirements of residents.

Giving split-up sectoral details, the report said non-oil producing sectors recorded notable improvement during 1410-11. The value added in agriculture sector increased by 7 per cent, raising the agriculture sector's share in the non-oil GDP from 10.7 per cent in 1406/07 to 14 per cent in 1410/11. Value added in the manufacturing sector (excluding refining industry) rose to 5.5 per cent while the public utilities sector (electricity, gas and water) recorded a growth rate of five per cent in 1410/11.

Preliminary data for 1411/12 (1991) and 1412/13) indicated a continuation of these trends.

Actual revenues and expenditures during the fiscal period from 3/6/1410 (31/12/1989) are estimated to have reached SR [Saudi rials] 316.6 billion and SR 476.8 billion respectively. The budget for fiscal year 1413-14

(1993) places government expenditure at SR 197 billion, increasing by 8.8 per cent over budget estimates for fiscal year 1412/13. Great emphasis is laid in the budget on economic development, especially in the domains of "education and training" and "health and social services " in addition to enhancement of defence capabilities. The budget projects revenues at SR 169 billion or 12 per cent more than the revenue estimates for the preceding year. Notwithstanding this rise, revenues will fall short of the projected expenditures by SR 27.8 billion. The difference will be financed through borrowing.

The average cost of living index increased by 4.6 per cent during 1411/12 compared with a rise of 2.1 per cent in 1990. Nevertheless, the inflation rate in the Kingdom, as measured by the rise in the cost of living index, is still one of the lowest in the world.

During 1992, the average cost of living index showed a decline of 0.4 per cent compared with a rise of 4.6 per cent in 1991. The reduction in the prices of utilities, petrol and charges for various services and fees, announced by the government in Ramadan 1412 (March 1992), appeared to have played an important role in decelerating the rise in the cost of living in the Kingdom.

Referring to monetary expansion, the report said the broadly defined money supply, (M3), increased by SR 27.4 billion or 14.5 per cent during 1411/12 (1991) as against SR 8.3 billion or 4.6 per cent in the previous year. However, there was a return to normal monetary expansion with money supply M3 rising by SR 5.3 billion or 2.5 per cent.

Available data for the first quarter of 1993 show that, money supply (M3) rose by 5.5 per cent to reach SR 233.3 billion at the end of March of the same year compared to the figure of the same quarter in the previous year.

Referring to bank deposits, the report said they increased sharply by SR 27.6 billion to reach a figure of SR 171.2 billion in 1991, by SR 6.2 billion to SR 177.4 billion and in the first quarter of 1993 by SR 9.4 billion to a figure of SR 186.8 billion.

Bank claims on private sector rose by 12.7 per cent in 1991, 18.4 per cent in 1992 and 7.6 per cent in the first quarter of 1993.

Referring to foreign assets, the report said in the first quarter of 1993, foreign assets of commercial banks rose by about SR 10 billion to reach a figure of SR 116.4 billion, and their level at the end of the quarter represented 39.5 per cent of banks' total assets.

The report highlighted progress realised by banking sector in terms of advanced services and said the number of branches of commercial banks at the end of 1993 reached 1,143.

By the end of the first quarter of 1993, banks' capital and reserves went up to SR 26.6 billion, representing 14.2 per cent of total deposits and 9.0 per cent of total assets.

Loans disbursed by the five specialized credit institutions during 1991 amounted to SR 3.7 billion.

The Kingdom's foreign trade recorded a rise during 1991 as total exports went up by 7.6 per cent to reach a sum of SR 178.5 billion. Imports also rose by 21 per cent during the same period. In 1992, imports increased by 12.6 per cent to reach SR 122.7 billion. The increase in imports was on account of the revival of economic activity in the Kingdom and reflected increased demand for both capital and consumption goods.

The merchandise trade surplus fell by five per cent from SR 85.4 billion in 1990 to SR 81.3 billion in 1991.

On the capital account side, financing requirements stood at SR 98.9 billion in 1991.

Dealing with the industrial development, the report said the manufacturing sector (including oil refining industry) recorded a real growth of 5.5 per cent in 1990 and nine per cent in 1991.

At the end of 1411, the number of operating industrial units reached 1,886 with a total capital of SR 114.8 billion.

The report also dealt with the progress realised by the Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC) and said the total annual production capacity of its complexes would reach 20 million metric tons by the middle of the current decade (1995) compared with current capacity of 13 million tons. The cost of Sabic's expansion projects is estimated to be SR 30 billion.

Consumption of electric power in the Kingdom went up by 7.9 per cent during 1411, raising total sales of electric energy to 62,632 million kilowatt-hours. Industrial consumption of electric energy rose by 2 per cent to 16,994 million kilowatt-hours in 1411, representing about 26.7 per cent of total electric energy consumption in the Kingdom.

The number of subscribers increased by 4 per cent during the year to reach 2.5 million.

Total production of the eight cement plants stood at 11.4 million tons of cement during 1991.

In the sphere of agricultural production, the report said its expansion is continuing, adding that it recorded a real growth rate of 7 per cent in 1990. Total grain production increased by 8.1 per cent to 4,256,000 metric tons in 1410/11. During the same year, the Saudi Arabian Agricultural Bank (SAAB) granted loans amounting to SR 1,017 million. Subsidies provided by the bank to farmers amounted to SR 149 million during the same year. The amount of loans and subsidies provided by the bank since its establishment reached SR 25 billion and SR 9.1 billion respectively.

Production of desalinated water, which also benefits the agriculture sector, increased by 3.4 per cent to 656.9 million cubic meters in 1411.

The report noted big progress in education and training, health and social affairs.

The number of male and female students enrolled at the various levels of education in the Kingdom rose to about 3 million during the academic year 1411.

The number of hospitals and primary health care centers run by the Ministry of Health rose to 166 and 1,692 respectively by the end of 1411. The number of beds in these hospitals also rose to 26,866. The number of the medical staff increased to 62,264. The number of hospitals run by other government agencies stood at 31, with a capacity of 7,377 beds.

Private hospitals in the Kingdom increased to 66 by the end of 1411, with a capacity of 6,680 beds. Private dispensaries reached 409 against 392 in the preceding year.

On the other hand, public corporations and private firms covered by the social insurance system stood at 1,389 and 13,511 respectively at mid 1412. The number of workers benefitting from the social insurance system (pension branch) exceeded 3.1 million while the number of subscribers to social insurance system (occupational risk branch) was more than 936,937.

In spheres of transport and communications, the total length of new asphalted roads which were constructed in the Kingdom during 1991 stood at 1,120 kilometers, raising total length of the Kingdom's road network to 127,698 km at the end of 1411-12.

Saudia, the national airlines, carried 9.4 million passengers and its cargo stood at 150,000 tons in 1991.

The number of passengers, who travelled through the Kingdom's 25 airports including three international, totaled 19.2 million in 1991. Construction work on King Fahd International Airport, near Dammam in the eastern province, is about 78 per cent complete by the end of 1991.

The number of passengers carried by the Saudi railways reached 414,000 during the fiscal year 1411/12. During the same year, the volume of dry cargo and fuel carried by the Saudi railways during the same year accounted for 1,218,000 tons.

The telephone exchange capacity rose by 3.2 per cent at the end of 1991 to reach 1.63 million. The number of foreign countries linked with the Kingdom through direct dialing stood at 196.

In the housing sector, the Real Estate Development Fund disbursed loans to the tune of SR 1,903 million for the construction of 6,519 housing units during 1411/12.

Cumulative amount of loans disbursed by the fund up to 1411/12 reached SR 103.3 billion. Cumulative number of private and investment housing units funanced by these loans reached 483,475.

Moreover, the Kingdom has made rapid progress in urban development, which included public utilities projects, such as water networks, sewage and rainwater disposal systems, road lighting and construction of markets and entertainment areas. Total expenditure on these projects during fiscal year 1411/12 stood at SR 750.8 million. Cumulative total of expenditure on the various public utilities under implementation throughout the Kingdom reached SR 15,029 million by the end of 1411/12, representing 35.9 per cent of total costs of these projects which are estimated at SR 41,807.4 million.

United Arab Emirates

Kuwaiti Minister Seeking Help To Boost Industry

NC1905124693 Paris AFP in English 1140 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, May 19 (AFP)—Kuwait is seeking the help of its Gulf Arab partners to map out an industrial strategy to lessen reliance on oil income, Kuwaiti Trade and Industry Minister 'Abdallah Rashid al-Hajiri said Wednesday [19 May].

"Kuwait is in the process of chalking out a new industrial and trade strategy and wishes to benefit from the experience of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries," he said, quoted in United Arab Emirates (UAE) newspapers.

Al-Hajiri was in the UAE on the third leg of a GCC tour, after visits to Saudi Arabia and Oman.

In Saudi Arabia, he visited the Jubayl industrial zone, one of the largest in the region. The minister also went to Rusayl industrial facilities in Oman and was expected to visit the Jebal 'Ali free zone in the emirate of Dubai.

"Kuwait is also planning to establish new industrial areas to encourage investment in the industrial sector," he said.

Like other oil-rich Gulf states, Kuwait has focused on the industrial sector to diversify income sources but most of its facilities are based abroad as they are joint ventures with other countries.

In contrast, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states have focused on industrial development at home. Most have reported progress since they began to pump huge investment in the development sector in the early 1970s.

"It is time for Kuwait to give attention to other sectors as the Iraqi invasion underscored the serious implications of the heavy reliance on oil and overseas investment," a Kuwaiti diplomat in the Gulf said.

Before the August 1990 invasion, Kuwait had around 100 billion dollars in overseas investment.

But the invasion crippled its oil industry for several months and forced it to sell more than half of the assets to finance the U.S.- led military campaign which evicted Iraq in February 1991 and post- war reconstruction.

Official Rejects UN Decision on Transporting Pilgrims

JN1905133193 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1227 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Baghdad, 19 May (INA)—Iraq has rejected a UN decision allowing Iraqi pilgrims to make the pilgrimage to the holy lands on foreign airlines.

In a statement to INA, Iraqi Airways Director General Nur-al-Din Safi Hammadi described the decision as illogical and inhuman, as it contravenes the most basic human rights. Besides, he added, the decision is deemed a manifestation of flagrant interference in the domestic affairs of independent states.

Hammadi went on to say that the transportation of Iraqi pilgrims on non-Iraqi aircraft is unacceptable to both the Iraqi Government and Iraqi pilgrims. He argued that foreign airlines require that their airfares be paid in hard currency—something which is impossible for the Iraqi pilgrims, who are suffering as a result of the tyrannical embargo.

Hammadi said: Iraq submitted two requests in April. In the first request, Iraq asked that it be granted permission to transport 2,000 Iraqi pilgrims to the holy lands on Iraqi Airways, Iraq's national airline. In the second request, Iraq asked for permission to assemble its civilian planes stationed in Jordanian, Tunisian, and Iranian airports in Baghdad to perform major maintenance on them, particularly since these planes have been in these airports for over two years.

Nur-al-Din Safi Hammadi pointed out that the two Iraqi requests were received positively and supported by several members of the UN Security Council. However, he maintained, the representatives of the United States and Britain on the Security Council, who are driven by a familiar hostility toward Iraq and its people, as usual, rejected the two requests and proposed that Iraqi pilgrims be transported to the holy lands on non-Iraqi airlines.

Hammadi added that Iraqi Airways had earlier submitted more than 20 requests regarding the maintenance of Iraqi aircraft, their assembly in Iraq, and the transportation of relief aid and sick people. However, thanks to pressure from the United States and Britain, these requests were all rejected.

Tariq 'Aziz Meets PLO Executive Committee Member

JN2005073293 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Tariq 'Aziz, Revolution Command Council [RCC] member and official in charge of the RCC's Arab Liberation Movements Bureau, today received 'Abdallah Hurani, PLO Executive Committee member.

The director of the RCC's Arab Liberation Movements Bureau attended the meeting.

Papers Attack Kuwaiti Rulers' 'Conspiratorial Role'

JN1705090993 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0730 GMT 17 May 93

[Excerpts] Baghdad, 17 May (INA)—Two Iraqi newspapers have lashed out at the regime imposed on Kuwait and its long-standing conspiratorial role in the plot against Iraq and its struggling nation.

In two articles today, AL-THAWRAH and AL-QADISIYAH review the reasons behind the grudges of the al-Sabah family against the Iraqi leadership and people.

AL-THAWRAH, speaking on behalf of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, says: The regime imposed on Kuwait has continued to play a conspiratorial role in the plot against Iraq in a mean, base, and vindictive spirit. This regime is taking pains in its exposed attempts to besmirch Iraq's stands and its unequivocal, principled political approach.

This worthless, agent regime is now only left with its false, cheap allegations to use as part of its exposed feverish attempts to instigate the U.S. Administration and its allies against Iraq. This regime, the paper adds, continues to offer bribes and gifts and fabricate crises and pretexts to pave the way for a new aggression against Iraq, or at least, to perpetuate the embargo against its people. [passage omitted]

The paper asserts that the agent regime in the Kuwait region has been experiencing real terror since it committed its major sin against the people of Iraq. This regime is terrified, sleepless, and without any security whatsoever. [passage omitted]

The paper concludes that the slaves holding authority in Kuwait have shown their moral degeneracy, embodying it in daily practices and positions and unceasing attempts to incite the forces of aggression and drive them to destroy Iraq and annihilate its besieged nation.

AL-QADISIYAH says the regime imposed on Kuwait is a lowly regime living on a land usurped from Iraq.

The paper refers to the recent fabricated story of the attempt to assassinate Bush during his visit to Kuwait, carried out by the al-Sabah men, in order to level accusations against Iraq. This is an exposed attempt to make the United States hate Iraq and inflict more harm on its people, given that neither the aggression nor the blockade has managed to undermine Iraq's will and true principles.

The paper also notes that the role assigned by imperialist circles to the rulers of Kuwait is no less dangerous than that assigned to Tel Aviv. [passage omitted]

Paper Says 'Curse' Reaching Saudi Regime

JN2005080493 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0615 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Baghdad, 20 May (INA)—AL-QADISIYAH has stressed that what is taking place in Saudi Arabia today is a natural outcome of the ethical, national, and religious impasse the Saudi regime found itself facing as a result of its participation in the aggression against Iraq. The paper says in an article today that the Saudi regime is the bridge via which all plots and aggressions against the Arab homeland have passed.

AL-QADISIYAH adds that the Saudi regime committed suicide when it affirmed its hostility toward the nation's aspirations, sound course of progress and construction, and efforts to achieve strength and development. The paper says that this was confirmed by the Saudi regime during the events of 2 August 1990, even though it was involved in the plot against Iraq long before that.

The paper notes that the serious events and developments awaiting the traitor of the two holy mosques in terms of his political future and that of his dynasty and entourage—will not be less than the escalating armed operations by the opposition which Husni Mubarak and his regime are facing in Egypt. Concluding, AL-QADISIYAH says: This is Iraq's curse, which has reached and will reach all those who encroached on Baghdad, the symbol of dignity, honor, glory, and civilization. Those who have already fallen are an example.

Envoy to UN Protests Iranian Shelling in North

JN2005074693 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Iraq has strongly protested the continued Iranian attacks on Iraqi territory in northern Iraq.

In a letter to the UN secretary general today, Iraq's permanent UN representative noted that on 14 May, the Iranian Armed Forces shelled the areas of [four place names indistinct]. He said that this hostile act incinerated large areas of [word indistinct] and destroyed citizens' property in those areas.

The memorandum stressed that the Iranian shelling of Iraqi areas in northern Iraq represents a flagrant violation of Iraq's sovereignty and interference in its domestic affairs. The memorandum emphasized that Iraq reserves the right to fully respond with all appropriate means to safeguard its legitimate rights and interests.

Kurdish Council Urges Opposition to Western Presence

JN1905193793 Baghdad INA in Arabic 1900 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Baghdad, 19 May (INA)—The Legislative Council of the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan has affirmed that our Kurdish people will proceed with the confrontation of imperialist designs, so that Iraq may remain united despite the heavy burdens it is enduring as a result of the hostile Western onslaught and the tyrannical rule of petty agents, as well as their suspect determination to undermine the unity of Iraq.

In an appeal issued at the conclusion of an extraordinary session held today as part of its spring term, the Legislative Council urged the Kurdish people to reject Western presence on sacred Iraqi territory and to expose the hostile schemes aimed at partitioning Iraq and undermining its history, glorious heritage, and national unity.

The Legislative Council also appealed to our Kurdish people in the Autonomous Region of Kurdistan to stand firmly against agents, subversive cliques, and those who are willing to sell out the homeland and its history, particularly after their conspiratorial and subversive role in the region, their treachery, and their plundering of public property and selling it outside Iraq have become public knowledge.

The members of the Legislative Council, on behalf of our Kurdish people, renewed their pledge to His Excellency President Saddam Husayn to remain loyal soldiers in the defense of Iraq, its lofty national unity, and its continuing development process.

Talabani Sees Saddam's 'Political Trap' for Kurds

PM2005113493 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 May 93 p 4

[Nabil Najm-al-Din report: "Iraqi Opposition Considers Issuing Currency Valid for Circulation in Kurdish Areas"]

[Text] London—After two days of meetings by leaders of the presidential and executive councils of the Unified Iraqi National Congress [UINC] in London, Major General Hasan al-Naqib, member of the presidential council three-member committee, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that a high-level presidential and executive delegation has been formed to explain the situation inside Iraq to leaders of Arab and European states.

The UINC meetings held in London over the past two days are the first of their kind to bring together leaders of both the executive and presidential councils.

Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that the meetings discussed the developments which Iraq has witnessed recently, including the cancellation of the Iraqi currency and the UN decision to withdraw international observers from northern Iraq. This is in addition to assessing the results of the recent visits by UINC leaders to the United States, the Netherlands, and Belgium and their effects on the course of the Iraqi opposition's political action in the UINC, which, Talabani said, "the United States deals with on the basis that it represents the democratic alternative to the totalitarian Ba'thist regime in Iraq."

Jalal Talabani described the Iraqi regime's decision to cancel the Iraqi 25-dinar bank note early in the month as a serious secessionist decision aimed against the unity of Iraq as a people and a political entity. He added: The Iraqi Government seceded politically from northern Iraq when it issued a decision to withdraw its government administrations there. We regard the decision to cancel dealing in the Iraqi dinar as economic secession.

He said: People fear that the Iraqi currency might be turned into a political tool for the Iraqi regime to use as it wishes. But the regime is unaware of the disastrous consequences of this policy, as people have lost their confidence in the Iraqi dinar. He added that "Iraqi Kurds in north Iraq are thinking seriously about issuing a new currency to deal in, away from the Iraqi regime's whims."

On the nature of these measures he said: A proposal was discussed at the UINC meetings to set up a bank in north Iraq along the lines of the Bank of Scotland in the UK to issue bank notes in the currency. The other option is to set up a branch of the Iraqi Central Bank in the Kurdish areas in order to do the same job, provided a financial cover is secured for it. Either of the two proposals is to be implemented under UINC supervision.

Talabani vehemently attacked the Iraqi Government, which, in his view, poses the biggest threat to Iraq's unity. The people's unity, he said, is built on a number of economic, political, military, educational, and cultural foundations. The Iraqi regime has persisted in torpedoing these foundations one after another.

The Iraqi regime torpedoed the political foundation by withdrawing government and educational administrations from north Iraq. It torpedoed the cultural foundation by committing ugly crimes against the Iraqi people's sons, Kurds and non-Kurds. And by canceling dealing in the dinar it is torpedoing the economic foundation. This is because 3.5 million Kurds have been hit by an unprecedented economic shock as a result of this decision, especially if we take into account the blockade imposed on the Kurds and their inability to change the bank notes in their possession.

On the future of the Kurds' and Iraqi opposition's relations with Turkey under Suleyman Demirel, Talabani said: "Former Turkish Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit told me that Saddam told him that his regime has left the Kurds to form their Kurdish government. Perhaps Saddam said this to scare the Turks. But we believe that Saddam is planning to drive us into a political trap, especially as he told us that he has no objection to the formation of a Kurdish government and emphasized that he would be the first to recognize our independent government."

He added: Saddam Husayn aims to provoke fears in Iran, Turkey, and other states with an interest in maintaining the status quo. Saddam Husayn has forgotten that we will not commit such a political mistake. Talabani said: We agreed to adhere to the federation formula within the framework of a constitutional, democratic, and pluralistic Iraqi state. This is the aim around which Iraqi political forces rallied within the UINC framework.

A Kurdish federation does not conflict with the concept of the Iraqi state's sovereignty. As for Turkey, it is gradually coming to understand these realities, and we do not imagine that it will be hostile to a Kurdish federation.

Opposition Says 6 Senior Officers Killed in al-Basrah

PM1905104093 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 18 May 93 p 4

[Unattributed report: "Iraq Opposition Says Former Minister's Brother Killed"]

[Text] London, AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—Iraqi opposition sources in London have said that six senior officers have been killed in al-Basrah Governorate—among them Staff Colonel Fadil Nusayyif Jasim, official in charge of the ruling Ba'th Party's Military Bureau and brother of former Information Minister Latif Nusayyif Jasim, in addition to five officers from the 5th Division, among them an officer with the rank of staff brigadier—in a resistance ambush while passing near al-Basrah marshlands.

The sources said that following the incident Baghdad sent units from the emergency forces to the area and adjacent areas to search for those who carried out the operation.

Resistance Reports Successful Attack in Marshlands

NC1905150093 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1330 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Groups belonging to the Islamic resistance troops last week launched a lightning attack against the headquarters of the 95th Brigade and the artillery emplacements of the 4th Corps, which are stationed in the area of Abu 'Ajul and Qada' al-Majarr al-Kabir in the marshlands of al-'Imarah Governorate. According to our sources the attack, in which the resistance troops used 82-mm mortars, RPG 7's, and medium-caliber machine guns, resulted in the destruction of the headquarters of the aforementioned brigade and inflicted heavy losses on the artillery emplacements and on the regime's ammunition depots.

The sources add that the regime's losses were as follows:

1. Over 25 of the regime troops were killed or wounded;

2. Three Russian-made (D-30) field artillery guns were destroyed;

3. Three vehicles were burned; and,

4. Two [word indistinct] for ammunition were seen burning.

Syria on Nuclear Disarmament Condition for Peace

TA2005081493 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 20 May 93 pp 1, 15

[By Shim'on Schiffer]

[Text] Syria is demanding that Israel divest itself of its nuclear option and subject its installations to international supervision as a condition for normalization between the two countries. This demand was raised by Dr. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation to the negotiations in Washington.

In a roundup sent to the prime minister and the foreign minister, Professor Itamar Rabinovich, Israel's ambassador in Washington and head of the Israeli delegation to the talks with the Syrians, writes that the political level in Jerusalem will be called upon to discuss the issue. Nevertheless, Rabinovich recommends to Jerusalem's decisionmakers to wait with their decision until al-Asad agrees to comply with the Israeli demand to spell out his perception of the nature of the future peace with Israel.

It further transpires from reports arriving in Jerusalem about the latest round of talks that Syria is demanding that Israel halt the construction of electric power stations on the Golan Heights.

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 20 May adds in a report by 'Aqiva Eldar and various news agencies published on pages A1 and A8: "European diplomats told an Israeli official this week that after Israel undertakes to give Syria back 'all of its territories,' Syria will offer 'all of peace.'"]

Reportage on Likud Convention, Topics, Results

Convention Discusses Golan Heights

TA1605173393 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1700 GMT 16 May 93

[Text] The Likud opened its convention this afternoon on the Golan Heights. The convention moves on to Tel Aviv tomorrow. The central item on the agenda is a new constitution for the party. Neil Sandler sums up the first day:

Likud party leader Binyamin Netanyahu told the delegates that Israel must negotiate a peace agreement out of strength. He stressed that the principle that every people needs a state is no longer valid in today's world. He said the Likud's message must be that the Golan was taken and will not be given back.

Opening the conference was President 'Ezer Weizman. Himself a former Likud member, who joined Labor, he was well received by his former party. He said the Likud could claim several firsts for itself in the Israeli political scene, including the first primaries to elect its leaders and the signing of a peace treaty with an Arab state. Weizman noted that no government in the past 10 years had expressed its objections to the peace treaty with Egypt.

One prominent Likud figure who did not show up at the convention was David Levi. He said this morning that he still believes party Chairman Netanyahu is trying to assume total power over the movement. He sharply criticized the proposed new constitution for the Likud.

Ari'el Sharon, who did show up at the convention, was also critical of the proposed constitution.

The convention now moves to Tel Aviv for two days of talks on issues of substance. The most important is likely to be the proposed Likud constitution, which will give party leader Netanyahu far more power than his predecessors in the Likud.

Convention Ends; Chairman Not Elected

TA1905045993 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0400 GMT 19 May 93

[Excerpts] The Likud party convention broke up in uproar last night over procedural and institutional issues. Maxim Levi, who was a candidate for chairman of the Central Committee, stormed out of the convention. As he left, he called out to the party chairman, Binyamin Netanyahu: You can turn the Likud into a dictatorship as you see fit. Maxim Levi's projected election as Central Committee chairman had earlier been regarded as a way to placate his brother David Levi, who boycotted the convention meeting.

Early this morning, a decision to elect a new party secretariat was canceled after several members claimed that the vote organized late last night did not allow enough time for an orderly election. The Central Committee is to be reconvened shortly to choose a secretariat.

Among the controversial proposals submitted at the conference was one by 'Uzi Landau that a future Likud government should not honor any agreement signed by the Rabin government which involved withdrawal from territories. [passage omitted]

But, 'Uzi Landau's proposal was rejected by party Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu and others, including Knesset Members [MK's] Beni Begin, Dan Meridor, and Roni Milo. [passage omitted]

[Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 19 May, in a page-A5 report by party affairs correspondent Yerah Tal, adds that "MK Roni Milo's proposal to unilaterally implement autonomy in Gaza first was yesterday received with prolonged booing at the Likud convention." According to the report, Milo told the delegates: "'We must propose a political plan which will show the nation that we intend to solve our problems with the Arabs, that we do not intend to perpetuate the state of war.'"]

Gazans Issued Travel Papers Obtained From Egypt

TA2005111593 Tel Aviv 'AL HAMISHMAR in Hebrew 20 May 93 p 4

[Report by Pinhas 'Inbari]

[Text] The Chamber of Commerce in Gaza has begun issuing Palestinians laissez-passers obtained from Cairo. With these papers, residents of the Gaza Strip may travel to Egypt and other Arab countries without a Jordanian passport. About 8,000 such papers have been issued so far.

Our correspondent points out that until the Six-Day War, Gazans were issued laissez-passers by the Egyptian military government. After the war, however, Jordan authorized Mayor Rashad al-Shawwa to issue Jordanian passports, which forced Gazans to travel to the Arab countries via Amman. With the new papers, Gazans may leave through the border terminal in the Sinai.

For its part, Jordan has recently made the requirements for entry permits tougher, perhaps in order to pressure the Palestinians not to accept the documents obtained from Cairo. Among other things, it obliges Palestinians to submit their applications for permits to its own appointed officials in the West Bank rather than through the ordinary public institutions, as had been the case until not too long ago. Our correspondent believes that behind-the-scenes preparations may be under way in Cairo to establish a Palestinian government that would be willing to assume responsibility for Gaza upon the implementation of the interim arrangement, but notes that there is no clear-cut proof of this.

Reportage on Area Violence, Deaths 17-19 May

WA1905183593

[Editorial Report] Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1300 GMT on 17 May reports: "A 17-year-old youth was killed by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers' gunfire in the village of Bayta near Nabulus this afternoon. A military source reported that six youths were wounded by IDF soldiers' gunfire, which was directed at stone throwers. One of the youths suffered critical stomach wounds and was treated on the spot, but died soon after. The five others were evacuated for treatment in a Nabulus hospital. Three of them suffered moderate wounds, and two were slightly wounded."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1500 GMT on 18 May reports: "An IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officer was killed in a clash between an IDF force and a terrorist squad near the village of Sujud in the northeastern part of the security zone this morning. Two IDF were wounded in the clash, one of them seriously and the other moderately. They were evacuated to Rambam Hospital in Haifa. The families of the soldiers were notified. During the clash some terrorists were apparently wounded, but they managed to escape.

"Our military affairs correspondent Karmela Menashe reports that the clash occurred this morning when an IDF force was operating in the northeastern part of the security zone. The IDF force encountered the terrorist squad, and in the ensuing battle an IDF officer was killed and two soldiers were wounded."

Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew on 18 May on page A1 in a report by military correspondent Eytan Rabin says: "In a series of incidents in the territories yesterday, three residents were killed and, according to Palestinian sources, 37 were wounded. The fatalities are an 11-year-old boy, who died of wounds sustained two days ago; a 17-year-old youth; and a 50-year-old woman."

"Ahmad al-Kurd, an 11-year-old resident of the al-Shati' refugee camp, died in Tel Hashomer Hospital last night of wounds he sustained a day earlier, when he was shot in the head by a soldier in an incident in which another 12-year-old boy was killed. Al-Kurd was shot when IDF [Israel Defense Forces] soldiers were chasing a prominent activist in the camp. The man dodged the soldiers and they opened fire at him, wounding the boy."

A report by Eytan Rabin on page A5 of the same edition of HA'ARETZ on IDF debriefings regarding the recent incidents adds that "the death of the 18-month-old infant was a tragic mistake by a sergeant." The soldiers evacuated the infant to a hospital, where he died of his wounds. The local IDF troop commander "apologized to the family for the mistake," and "it is believed that the family will be allowed to file a suit with the Civil Administration for compensation."

Regarding the killing of the 12-year-old al-Shati' resident, sources in the IDF "claim that the debriefing indicates that there were no IDF units at the time and site of the incident, and the matter is being looked into."

"Palestinian sources reported that 21 residents of the al-Shati' refugee camp were injured in clashes with IDF troops yesterday. Another 10 were injured in Rafah, and one was injured in Dayr al- Balah. A firebomb was thrown last night at an Israeli car near the village of Silat al-Zahr. No one was hurt."

"Since the closure was imposed on the Gaza Strip seven weeks ago, 81 fugitives have been caught or killed."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1600 GMT on 18 May reports: "A 20-year-old man from the al-Nusayrat refugee camp was killed in a stoning incident in the Gaza Strip tonight. His body was transferred to a Gaza hospital, but was snatched away and buried. Our correspondent Moti Amir quotes local residents as saying that eight inhabitants were shot and wounded by soldiers during stoning incidents in the Gaza Strip.

"Two explosive charges were discovered this afternoon near the village of al-Ghadir in the Bethlehem area. An IDF patrol which discovered the charges called a Border Police sapper, who blew up one of them and neutralized the other without causing any harm.

"Jerusalem Police recently uncovered two gangs whose members are identified with Fatah and are suspected of torching 13 cars, stonings, and organizing disturbances in East Jerusalem. Jerusalem Police have resolved about 70 cases of vehicle torchings. They have detained 75 suspects, and indictments have been issued against most. Since the start of the year, 156 vehicles have been torched."

Paris AFP in English at 1801 GMT on 18 May in a report datelined "Gaza City, Occupied Gaza Strip" says: "Israeli troops on Tuesday shot and killed three Palestinians and wounded some 30 others in a raid on a meeting of Islamic fundamentalists in the occupied Gaza Strip, Palestinian sources said.

"A fourth Palestinian, Talib Abu-'Atiyah, 18, was shot earlier in the day by soldiers perched on rooftops in the al-Nusayrat refugee camp, Palestinian sources said.

"The sources said Israeli soldiers raided a meeting of some 2,000 people gathered in the courtyard of a farm in Jabaliya to mark the May 11 slaying of Hasan Hammuda, a suspected member of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] shot when trying to flee into Egypt."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1900 GMT on 18 May reports: "Kamal Aslan, a 28-year-old man from the al-Mughazi refugee camp, died in hospital today of wounds suffered yesterday. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that he was wounded by soldiers' gunfire while throwing stones in the direction of an IDF observation post in the refugee camp.

"Our correspondent adds that two youths were killed during incidents in the Gaza Strip today, and more than 20 others were wounded."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 0900 GMT on 19 May reports: "Two armed terrorists were killed in a clash with IDF troops south of Hebron this morning. Colonel Me'ir, commander of the Hebron sector, told our correspondent Moti Amir that an IDF unit was on foot patrol in the area of Derekh Hashalom near Hebron when the soldiers spotted two suspicious figures, one carrying a Kalashnikov assault rifle. The two terrorists escaped and barricaded themselves in an abandoned building, which the IDF unit proceeded to surround. After the two refused soldiers' calls to come out and give themselves up, antitank shells were fired at the building. The two terrorists tried to flee through the windows, but were shot and killed.

"Hebron residents told our correspondent that the two men lived in Hebron, where they belonged to an 'Izz-al-Din al-Qassam squad, and that they had been on the wanted list for the past year for their part in attacks against the security forces."

Paris AFP in English at 0928 GMT on 19 May reports from Jerusalem: "Israeli soldiers Wednesday shot dead two activists of the Palestinian Muslim fundamentalist movement Hamas, holed up in a building on the occupied West Bank, the army said.

"The militants, one of them armed with a Kalashnikov assault rifle, sought refuge in the abandoned building near Hebron after they were spotted by a patrol.

"They were shot dead as they tried to escape from the windows after soldier fired several anti-tank rockets at the building, an army spokesman said."

Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1700 GMT on 19 May reports: "Theo Samuel, a 21-year-old IDF soldier from Beersheba, died of his wounds in the Tel Hashomer Hospital today. He was severely wounded when soldiers manning a lookout post in Nabulus were stabbed last week. Another soldier was injured in the incident. A third soldier fired at the terrorists, but they managed to escape."

Military Praises Lebanese Army Role in South Lebanon

TA1905175293 Jerusalem Israel Television Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Hizballah is operating against the security zone in southern Lebanon and avoids carrying out terrorist activities against Israeli targets on the northern border in the wake of an understanding reached between the U.S. Administration and Syria during the peace talks. This was affirmed by a senior military source to our correspondent Dani Levi. The source added that the Lebanese Army is continuing to increase its strength in and sovereignty over Lebanon. The military source praised the role being played by the 6th brigade, commanded by Colonel Sha'ban, in the al-Nabatiyah region to prevent infiltration into and the staging of terrorist activities in the security zone.

Arab Foreign Ministers To Meet in Early June

JN1905120593 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] In a statement to the JORDANIAN NEWS AGENCY, Foreign Minister Dr. Kamil Abu-Jabir has said that as a result of the contacts he held with the foreign ministers of the Arab countries concerned with the peace process, it was decided to convene the next coordination meeting at the ministerial level in Amman in early June.

During the meeting, there will be a comprehensive assessment of the progress of the peace process, particularly the ninth round of negotiations, which has recently been concluded in Washington.

Islamic Party Details Meeting With U.S. Envoy

JN1905082093 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 19 May 93 p 10

[By JORDAN TIMES staff reporter P.V. Vivekanand]

[Text] Amman—The political front of Jordan's mainstream Islamic movement Tuesday revealed that it held recently an unprecedented meeting with the American ambassador in Amman, during which it reaffirmed its known positions against the Arab-Israeli peace process and U.S. policies in the Middle East.

The Islamic Action Front (IAF), founded as a political-party by members of the Muslim Brotherhood last year, also said it voiced its opposition to any unilateral move to amend Jordan's Election Law and that it believes in the "gradual and wise" implementation of Islamic law in the Kingdom.

An IAF press statement said the May 10 meeting between Ambassador Roger Harrison and IAF officials headed by Secretary-General Ishaq al-Farhan was sought by the American side.

Peter Kovach, the embassy spokesman, confirmed the meeting and described it as routine and part of his mission's continuing contacts with Jordanian political parties.

"It is normal for diplomats to keep in touch with leaders of political parties," Mr. Kovach said. Prior to the May 10 meeting, he told the Jordan Times, "American diplomats have had contacts with members of the Islamic Action Front as well as other political parties." The ambassador himself, however, had not personally taken part in direct meetings with the Islamists before, due mainly to their reluctance to meet with him, according to information available to the Jordan Times.

American diplomats have been meeting leaders of Islamic movements in the Arab World and elsewhere in what the State Department describes as an effort to understand "political Islam." American diplomats have had contacts with the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, the Palestinian Muslim Brotherhood, before the administration formally announced an end to meetings with Hamas officials three months ago.

Mr. Kovach would not comment on what was discussed during the meeting between Ambassador Harrison and IAF leaders. Nor would he say how accurate was the IAF's version of the discussions.

But other sources close to the talks said the IAF's statement was "a fairly accurate summary" of what was discussed.

The IAF statement had a preamble which sought to explain why the front held the meeting with the U.S. ambassador.

The front wanted to "explain its position on political issues that have become issues of international concern," the statement said, and quoted Dr. al-Farhan as telling the ambassador that "We prefer that others hear from us directly rather than the distored versions of the Zionist and Western media.

During the meeting, held at the IAF office in al-'Abdali [an area of amman] and attended by IAF Assistant Secretary-General 'Abdallah al-'Akayilah and Administrative Committee chief Hamzah Mansur, the ambassador explained that his visit was a courtesy call and not different from similar visits to other political parties in Jordan to discuss various political issues, and the peace process, the statement said.

The statement quoted Dr. al-Farhan as saying that the IAF was a party which operates in conformity with the Jordanian Constitution and the Political Parties law of 1992.

Dr. al-Farhan sought an explanation on what President Bill Clinton meant in comments he made when he received the credentials of the new Jordanian ambassador in Washington, Dr. Fayiz al-Tarawinah, and whether his words included a reference to the IAF.

"The ambassador denied (that there was any reference to the Islamists' programme in President Clinton's comments) but his explanation was not convincing," the IAF statement said.

In his comments, made April 14, Mr. Clinton paid tribute to Jordan's democratisation process and said:

"Your progress has been even more noteworthy considering the great difficulties facing Jordan, and the desire of some to use the very instruments of democratisation to gain and keep power for themselves."

Dr. al-Farhan expressed "the anger of the Jordanian people against the blockade at al-'Aqabah—imposed by the U.S.-led international enforcers of the embargo against Iraq—and particularly referred to the interception and diversion in April of a ship carrying newsprint for Jordan causing problems for the Jordanian press.

The diversion of the ship was an "aggressive action that infringes upon Jordan's sovereignty and democratic march since the press is one of the pillars of democracy which the U.S. asserts it seeks to protect," Dr. al-Farhan said, according to the IAF statement.

The ambassador denied any such motives behind the interception and said the intercepted ship was only one of the three such vessels, but "the explanation was below the minimum level of reason," the front's statement said.

Dr. al-Farhan "voiced the IAF's opposition to the American policy which is biased in favour of the Israeli enemy, the state of Israel, and cooperation with (that state) against what they call Islamic fundamentalism."

The IAF leader accused the U.S. of "dealing with the Islamic renaissance as a substitute enemy after the demise of communism and the Soviet Union," the statement said.

"This animosity will not serve the cause of coexistence or peace in the world," Dr. al-Farhan said. "And the consequences will not be confined to the Arab World."

He called upon the U.S. to "accept the reality of Muslims, who represent one-fifth of the world population with a rich cultural depth," according to the statement.

Dr. al-Farhan, in an implicit reference to Egypt and Algeria which are fighting militant Islamists, "condemned the American support for some Arab regimes which are exercising terrorism against their own peoples."

Replying to a question asked by the ambassador on links between the Muslim Brotherhood and the IAF, Dr. al-Farhan said that the front was "financially, politically and administratively independent of the Brotherhood."

"Many Muslim Brotherhood members are also members of the front but it is their private individual capacity," Dr. al-Farhan said. "The front welcomes anyone who believes Islam is the soluton," he told the ambassador, according to the IAF statement.

Asked by the ambassador whether the front was seeking to implement Sharia, Dr. al-Farhan was quoted as saying that a "wise and gradual" introduction of Islamic law was an objective, "but the front will ensure that all political trends in the country share in shouldering national responsibilities."

Dr. al-Farhan rejected any unilateral government amendment to the Election Law. "The Lower House's term has not officially ended and it is the proper forum for discussing or amending any law. We will not accept any law that bypasses Parliament, the representative of the people of Jordan."

Dr. al-Farhan reiterated the Islamists' rejection of the American- backed Arab-Israeli negotiations saying the process "aims at depriving the Palestinians of 90 percent of their land for the benefit of the Jews."

"We see the U.S. as a full partner of Israel and (Israel's) expansionism," said Dr. al-Farhan, whose party advocates the elimination of the state of Israel.

"In our view, the solution to the Palestinian problem is the return of all Jews (in Israel) to where they came from—the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe," Dr. al-Farhan said, "Or the U.S. should absorb them in its soil," according to the press statement.

"Only then, the people of Palestine, with all their different beliefs, will be able to exercise their right to self-determination," said Dr. al-Farhan.

He said: "No dealings with thieves who stole our land, dispersed our people and seized our resources with the help of Western colonial powers."

Actions by U.S. Embassy Official Questioned

JN1905181093 Amman AL-UFUQ in Arabic 19 May 93 p 6

[Text] Jim Turner, third secretary at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, has visited a licensed shop in Jabal Amman that sells hunting rifles. The shop is owned by Jordanian citizen Dawud 'Abd-al-Hadi. Of course, the purpose of the visit was neither to purchase a rifle or ammunition, nor was it a social visit. The purpose of the visit was to ask the shopkeeper about a license permit for 40,000 rounds of ammunition and whether or not this was a big figure!!! The shop attendant was courteous and clever, telling him that Jordanian authorities are the ones which had determined and which usually determine the weapons and ammunition imported by the shop, which, of course, are used for hunting and training.

After a short while, as could be expected, the issue assumed other proportions which we will not discuss. However, we would like to ask the Foreign Ministry the following:

—What status does the U.S. Embassy in this country enjoy?

—How does an embassy employee take the liberty of asking Dawud 'Abd-al-Hadi how many rounds of ammunition he imports?

—What right does a U.S. diplomat have to argue with a Jordanian citizen—who has a licensed shop and receives all the necessary official permits—about what or how much he imports?

We ask the Foreign Ministry and ourselves: Is the U.S. Embassy really like any other embassy in town?

Disinformation on Relations With Iraq Rejected

JN2005092393 Amman AL-RA'Y in Arabic 20 May 93 pp 1, 21

[Editorial: "We and Iraq"]

[Text] Whenever His Majesty King Husayn speaks about Jordanian-Iraqi ties and the Jordanian position on Iraq's entry into Kuwait and the subsequent Gulf crisis, certain Arab media—of the coalition states—and Western media deliberately distort his statements and insist on distorting facts and making allegations and falsehoods.

In his majesty's interview with French television, his majesty answered a question on Iraq. Questions posed by representatives of these media organs concerning Iraq are usually marked by the desire to do damage to that great Arab country and its leadership and harm our position that rejects the conspiracy of aggression against the Iraqi people. Although on every occasion his majesty answers such questions in very clear terms, what is carried from the entire answer is a phrase, which misrepresents the truth and which is exaggerated and presented as a fact.

Jordan's story with fraternal Iraq arouses the anger of many people in our world who have fallen in the coalition's trap, and who have imagined that it scored military triumphs that can benefit them, even if this gain was at the expense of values and principles. Iraq's invalidation of an Iraqi banknote is a flagrant example of the hostile media's falsehoods and distortion of facts. Initially, these media said the Iraqi decision was a major Iraqi blow against the Jordanians. When that lie was exposed and failed to achieve its sick objective, we began to hear about a Jordanian-Iraqi agreement struck by His Majesty King Husayn and Iraqi President Saddam Husayn to invalidate that banknote.

We go back to what the king has said to French television and what he says whenever he is asked about Iraq to reaffirm that Jordan—king, people, and government—supports the Iraqi people's national unity and territorial integrity. Jordan also supports the fraternal people's right to security and stability and rejection of injustice as represented by the colonialist double standards in dealing with international legitimacy. Jordan further supports their political choices that are formulated and implemented in Baghdad and not in Washington, London, or any other capital of a small or big country. We, as the king has said, stand with Iraq as it tries to help itself get out of its difficult circumstances. The king has also said that Iraq is an important country that has to remain cohesive and that no party inside or outside the region can imagine it can bypass it or make any arrangements without its approval and consent. Regarding the hostile insistence on destroying Iraq's power under the pretext of confronting the weapons of mass destruction, this insistence, to have any credibility, must apply to all, particularly the Zionist entity.

King Husayn has spoken in clear terms. We hope that the Western media and their Arab affiliates will halt their attempt to distort our stands, cast doubts on our principles and objectives, or push us to stand in a trench against our homeland and nation. We have not been contaminated by a bribe or weakened by extortion or pressure. We kept our heads up, not only because we stood, and are still standing to the side of Iraq in its dilemma, but because we stood to the side of our nation, of which the Iraqis constitute an honorable vanguard.

King Confers With Hungarian Foreign Ministry Officials

JN1805185493 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 18 May 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received at the Royal Hashemite Court today Dr. (Aldrash Kalaman), state secretary for political affairs at the Hungarian Foreign Ministry, and (Sigmund Divorsanski), director of the Arab Desk at the Hungarian Foreign Ministry. Kalaman handed his majesty a letter from his excellency the Hungarian president containing an invitation for his majesty to visit Hungary. His Majesty accepted the invitation and promised to respond to it in the near future.

Kalaman conveyed the Hungarian president's greetings and congratulations on the 40th anniversary of his majesty's assumption of constitutional powers. He also praised stability and democracy in Jordan, as well as shrewdness in dealing with international and regional crises.

His Majesty King Husayn then praised the friendly relations between Jordan and Hungary and expressed his desire to see them invested on the basis of mutual respect and cooperation. His majesty also stressed the need to face persistent issues to reach a safe future in which just peace and stability prevail on the basis of human rights, freedom, and democracy. Khalid al-Karaki, chief of the Royal Hashemite Court, also attended the meeting.

UN Spokesman: No Official Word of Swedish Pullout

NC1905135893 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 19 May 93

[Telephone interview with Timor Goksel, spokesman for UN Interim Force in Lebanon, UNIFIL, by unidentified radio correspondent in English; place and date not given—recorded]

[Excerpt] [Correspondent] Mr. Goksel, we heard that the Swedish force of the United Nations will leave Lebanon soon.

[Goksel] We haven't heard anything like that ourselves. As the UN, we have absolutely no information whatever that they are leaving. Therefore, we don't know even when they are leaving, because we don't know if they are leaving. The only thing we have heard is the continuing debate in Sweden, which occasionally comes up on the radio or in newspaper reports. But as of today, as the United Nations we have absolutely no official information on this and normally, I mean, it is very normal that we should be told about it if there is something like this going to happen because it would take a lot of planning. But as of this moment, there is no official news of any of this sort. So [words indistinct] a debate in Sweden. [passage omitted]

Buwayz on Arab Foreign Ministers Amman Meeting

NC1905191093 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1800 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has announced that he received two phone calls from his Jordanian counterpart Kamil Abu- Jabir yesterday and today. In these calls, he said, they consulted over holding a coordination meeting of the foreign ministers of the Arab countries concerned with the bilateral peace talks, scheduled to be held in Amman.

Buwayz added that no meeting will be held before receiving invitations for the next round from the conference's two sponsors, the United states and Russia. He expects the Amman meeting to be held in early June and said that consultations are under way to fix a date.

U.S. 'Full' but Not 'Neutral' Partner in Talks

PM1905160393 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 17 May 93 p 13

[George Sam'an article: "The Full Partner"]

[Text] Although it failed to make any progress, the ninth round of the Arab-Israeli negotiations was a test for all parties, especially the U.S. sponsor, who played the part of "full partner" for the first time but failed to be a neutral partner at least, not to say that it put pressure on the Arabs when it was expected to put pressure on Israel. The Americans talk of disappointment but they should first blame themselves before blaming the Arabs, who offered more than what was required of them, to the point of infuriating Palestinian and Arab public opinion. The Arabs showed a realistic understanding of the balances of power and what is needed for a settlement and they surmounted all the obstacles created by Yitzhaq Rabin's government before the start of the latest round. They made concessions in expectation of a U.S. move and of implementation of U.S. promises, and they did so out of a desire to help the new administration which was determined to have a foreign policy "achievement" after four months in office.

The Americans should themselves demonstrate the realism they asked the Arabs to understand and demonstrate. In other words, they should reconsider their method of dealing with the Arab parties. Was it reasonable for the [U.S.] Administration to adopt the Israeli position in the paper it proposed for the Israeli-Palestinian track? Was it reasonable not to describe the Arab territories as occupied territories? Was it reasonable to forget the promises it made to the Palestinians and other delegations to ensure resumption of the negotiations and to adopt the stance of Rabin's government?

Perhaps the U.S. Administration should raise its level of representation in the negotiations and change the way it treats the Arab parties by acting the way it did with Egypt and Israel at Camp David. It should stop regarding the Arabs as helpless because insistence on doing that would torpedo the entire peace process and play into the hands of all those opposed to the peace process, making it easier for them to foil that process or force the Arab parties concerned to withdraw from it, unless the role of full partner means putting pressure on the Arabs as requested by Israel, as when it urged Washington to intervene in the Israeli-Syrian track, for example. The United States realizes that a reconsideration of its role and a peace concept quite detached from the Israeli peace concept can only be dictated through a unified Arab stand or Arab coordination, which was evident before the resumption of the negotiations and during the ninth round, indicating that there can be no progress on any front unless there is progress on the Palestinian front and also that progress on the Palestinian front does not mean a final settlement without progress on the other fronts. In other words, the target is a comprehensive settlement.

One of the positive aspects of the ninth round is perhaps the fact that it confirmed the concept of Arab coordination. For example, the concentration on the Syrian track to the exclusion of the other tracks in the previous rounds achieved no breakthrough just as the concentration, in the latest round, on the Palestinian track did not so much produce a breakthrough as expose the U.S. support for the Israeli position.

Therefore, when the Arab parties meet in Amman at the end of this month to discuss the next round of negotiations, they should enhance coordination among them

and should lay down clear rules for such coordination, particularly as the Palestinians might this time take a harder line than before the ninth round, having seen and experienced the role of the "full partner."

Reportage on Military Actions, Engagements in South

Southern Areas Shelled

NC1505163793 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1530 GMT 15 May 93

[Text] Several shells originating from the occupation forces positions in al-Zaffatah landed in Jabal al-Rayhan and al-Wadi al- Akhdar areas in Iqlim al-Tuffah this afternoon, causing only material damage. Jabal al-Safi heights, Mlita hills, and Jabal al- Rabi' also came under bombardment with 155mm shells shortly after 1600.

In another development, Lebanese Army units in the liberated area of Hasbayya have found a strange object in Jisr al-Kufayr 5 km from the front line. According to military sources, the object is known as a listening and aiming device. This is the second such object to be found in a week. It resembles a small rocket, has an umbrella and plastic casing with English and Hebrew markings, and is about 30 centimeters long and 20 centimeters wide.

Israelis Shell Iqlim al-Tuffah

NC1605132393 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1300 GMT 16 May 93

[Text] At 1400 today, the Israeli occupation forces deployed in al-Zaffatah bombarded Iqlim al-Tuffah hills, particularly Mlita, al- Luwayzah, Jabal Safi, and Jabal al-Rayham with 155-mm field artillery. The bombardment was accompanied by extensive raking of the southern quarter of 'Arab Salim with 12.7mm machine guns from the agents' positions in Tallat Sujud.

In the afternoon, the outskirts of al-Nabatiyah al-Fawqa came under artillery barrage from the Israeli position in al-Dabshah.

Resistance Attacks

NC1605170793 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 16 May 93

[Text] According to reports from the south, a resistance group today attacked a position jointly held by the South Lebanese Army [SLA] and the Israeli Army in Sujud. No details have been received about the operation.

The al-Litani River basin and the outskirts of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah and Zawtar al-Gharbiyah came under heavy bursts of sniper fire at 1545 today from the Israeli position in 'Alman-al- Shumariyah. Israeli military aircraft also carried out reconnaissance sorties over the south.

According to security reports, the Israeli forces and the SLA have adopted strict security measures in the border strip area on the anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel for fear of resistance attacks.

Explosion in Strip; Villages Shelled

NC1705173893 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 17 May 93

[Text] Citing security sources in the south, our correspondent has said that an explosive device blew up near an Israeli position in Khallat Muhaybib in the central sector of the border strip shortly after 1600 today. The Israelis shelled Shaqra, Majdal Silm, and the outskirts of Bra'shit with 155mm guns from their positions in Khallat Muhaybib. Two Israeli helicopters flew over the area and raked the wadis between Shaqra and Bayt Yahun.

Israeli Planes Strafe Areas

NC1805172293 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1615 GMT 18 May 93

[Excerpt] According to the latest information from the south, Israeli warplanes overflew the towns of Zawtar al-Sharqiyah, Zawtar al-Gharbiyah, and the Litani River basin at about 1500 today, raking the areas with heavy machine guns. The Israeli forces also fired four phosphorous shells from their positions on 'Ali al-Tahir hill. At 1415, the Israeli forces on Bayt Yahun hill shelled 'Ayta al- Jabal, Tibnin, the vicinity of Bayt Yahun, and Bra'shit and its environs. They also used machine guns to rake al-Wadi al-Akhdar, Jabal Rayhan, and the Sujud area. [passage omitted]

Israeli Aircraft Overfly al-Nabatiyah

NC1905123193 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1115 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Israeli military aircraft carried out reconnaissance sorties over al-Nabatiyah and Iqlim al-Tuffah this morning.

Resistance Attacks Israeli Position

NC2005083293 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 0800 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Resistance fighters attacked an Israeli position on al- Suwayda' hill at around 1000 today using automatic weapons and rockets. The Israeli forces shelled the perimeter of the position, particularly al-Wadi al-Akhdar. Clashes involving automatic weapons and rockets reportedly are taking place between the occupation forces on al-Suwayda' hill and resistance fighters. The al-Matahin area, on the outskirts of 'Arab Salim, and the al-Zahrani basin also have come under artillery fire.

Israeli helicopters flew for three hours over the south, firing smoke bombs.

'Faithful Resistance' Claims Casualties

NC2005112193 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1030 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] The central operations room of the Faithful Resistance has issued a statement saying that at about 1000 today, one of its groups attacked the occupation forces' position in al-Suwayda'. A 30-minute battle involving automatic weapons and rockets took place between the resistance fighters and the soldiers manning the position. During this battle, the resistance fighters were able to destroy and burn an armored personnel carrier and kill or wound its seven crew members. Meanwhile, a second resistance group destroyed two artillery emplacements in the Israeli position in al-Suwayda' and inflicted further losses among the occupation forces. The Israeli enemy forces retaliated by shelling al-Wadi al-Akhdar and 'Arab Salim.

The al-Matahin area on the outskirts of 'Arab Salim and the al- Zahrani basin this morning came under artillery fire.

At 1110 today, Israeli warplanes flew over al-Nabatiyah, firing smoke bombs, and broke the sound barrier over Beirut.

Five Executed for 24 Mar Prison Fire Deaths

JN2005104693 Damascus SANA in Arabic 0830 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Damascus, 20 May (SANA)—Five criminals were put to death by hanging this morning in a public square in al-Hasakah in the northeastern part of the country. The five criminals were found guilty of the ugly crime of setting fire to al-Hasakah Central Prison on 24 March 1993 which resulted in the death of 57 prisoners. Four other prisoners suffered burns of varying degrees.

Life sentences were handed down to the three other members of the gang who were involved in the crime.

Diplomatic Relations Established With Estonia

JN1905174693 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1640 GMT 19 May 93

[Excerpt] Moscow, 19 May (SANA)—The Syrian Arab Republic and the Republic of Estonia signed an agreement here today establishing diplomatic relations. [passage omitted]

Commentaries View Results of Ninth Round of Talks

U.S. Role Viewed

JN1905164193 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1135 GMT 19 May 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Arab and international media attention is still focused on the results of the ninth round of Washington peace talks. These results were disappointing and did not meet expectations, especially since this round was considered an opportunity that should not be wasted since it was accompanied by complicated circumstances, the causes and supporters of which are known to all.

Despite the disappointment generally expressed by heads of the Arab delegations on all tracks of the talks with the Israeli side, there is an important sign which surfaced during the last round that deserves considerable pause. What is meant here is the surfacing of signs of the full partner role to which the Democratic U.S. Administration promised to commit itself as an expression of its seriousness and willingness to play an active role, especially in light of Washington's capacity as a cosponsor of the peace process. This was to push the peace process forward and achieve its desired goal in realizing a just and comprehensive peace in the region.

We can now say that actual signs of a U.S. role as full partner were further embodied on the ground during the ninth round after all statements by U.S. officials drew the theoretical framework marking the limits of this role.

During the ninth round, Washington played a more active role, demonstrated in more than one form and formula. Here, we concentrate on form and formula to distinguish them from substance. A form of this active role was demonstrated by U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's willingness to meet with heads of the delegations taking part in the talks at the beginning of the round, to affirm the U.S. Administration's commitment and seriousness in providing opportunities for the success of the peace negotiations. Moreover, during the round, we noticed that U.S. officials were assigned with maintaining almost daily contact with parties to the various tracks of talks for purposes of following up, conveying ideas, and briefing the parties on developments on each track. This is something that did not exist during previous rounds.

Perhaps the more prominent form of the U.S. role as a full partner was when the United States called for a tripartite Palestinian-U.S.-Israeli meeting to present a U.S. proposal on a joint Palestinian-Israeli declaration of principles. Formally, this development seems very important. It looks as if Washington entered as a third party to the process of direct negotiations. It is well known that Israel has consistently refused this since the call for convening the Madrid conference. Washington made an additional step in playing its role as a full partner by presenting a proposal to the two negotiating teams.

However, followers of events in the ninth round are aware that the Palestinian delegation did not respond to the U.S. call for that tripartite meeting, as it considered the meeting a formal matter free of any real substance, except for the presentation of a U.S. proposal to the Palestinian and Israeli sides. It is also well known that the Palestinian delegation rejected the U.S. proposal because it was far from being a response to its demands.

Through an assessment of all these events, we can say that the ninth round provided an opportunity for becoming better acquainted with the features, limits, and nature of the new U.S. role, about which the new Democratic administration spoke. Indeed, we can say that the Arab side can draw a first impression of this role in that it formally reflects, without a doubt, greater U.S. activity and seriousness in following up the process of peace negotiations and a willingness to push this process forward. As for the substance of this role, it is, however, difficult to say at this stage that it measures up to the level of Arab expectations.

Advancing from this premise, the more the U.S. Administration, which has defined for itself the role of a full partner to push the peace process ahead, succeeds in making the party that is not committed to the bases of peace which launched the peace process and to the land-for-peace principle—in this case Israel—abide by all these bases and resolutions, the more it will succeed in attaining the objectives expected from this role. In contrast, if the U.S. Administration distances itself from the role of a full partner, this role will turn into nothing more than a formal development that will fail to achieve the expected objectives.

Al-'Allaf on Ninth Round

JN1905171693 Damascus Syrian Arab Television Network in Arabic 2025 GMT 18 May 93

[Interview with Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian delegation to the Arab-Israeli peace talks, by an unidentified reporter; place, date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Reporter] Good evening. The ninth round of peace talks in Washington has come to an end. To assess what has happened, tonight we host Dr. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, head of the Syrian Arab delegation to the Washington peace talks. Good evening.

[Al-'Allaf] Good evening, you are welcome.

[Reporter] You know and everyone knows that this round has failed. Big hopes were pinned on it. What has happened, and why?

[Al-'Allaf] I do not know why this has happened. However, in fact, what has happened is that nothing has happened. As you said, there has been disappointment because something was supposed to take place during this round. The ninth round of talks was held after a hiatus of approximately four and one-half months because of numerous Israeli obstacles to the peace process. The deportee issue was just one of them. Besides, there were many other reasons, foremost among them being that the previous eight rounds were also fruitless. Since the ninth round was held after all these obstacles and after the Arabs showed a great deal of seriousness and flexibility when they decided to come to this round after all the obstacles laid by Israel, it was expected—and it was promised—that the Israelis would show on all tracks more seriousness and a change in the inflexible mentality which is not committed and does not accept to be committed to the documents and bases of the peace process which they have agreed to attend.

[Reporter] Nine rounds of talks and hundreds, or rather, dozens of sessions have been held. What has been taking place inside these rooms?

[Al-'Allaf] Negotiations. We have been eager to hold serious negotiations since the very first moment. On the other tracks, as we all know, the Israelis kept maneuvering around formalities and procedural matters. However, in both cases, be it on the Syrian track, which began with serious discussions at the beginning...

[Reporter, interrupting] Let us concentrate on the Syrian track first, especially the land-for-peace formula, which was followed by a formula calling for full peace in return for full withdrawal. What have they offered?

[Al-'Allaf] The Israelis have offered nothing more than consistently setting preconditions and talking about the essence of peace, not merely peace as an abstract term. Even when you tell them: I am ready for full peace in return full withdrawal, they insist on knowing what full peace means. We tell them: It is illogical to ask about details before talking about the bases. The peace process is based on the principle of trading land for peace. It is based on a resolution which says that there are the two principles or two basic steps leading to peace. The first step is Israel's withdrawal from the territories it occupied in 1967. This is because this occupation is unacceptable in accordance with the principle of inadmissibility of the acquisition of territory by force. In return, when Israel withdraws from all these territories, a state of peace can be established, the state of war can be terminated, and each party can acknowledge other parties' sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity. All the Arabs and the Syrian Arab side on the Syrian track showed commitment to all the obligations stated by Resolution 242. However, Israel has not shown commitment toward its single obligation, which is withdrawal from the territories it occupied in 1967. When it says anything about withdrawal, it tends to be ambiguous, and it links its vague readiness for withdrawal to rejected matters, even in accordance with Resolution 242.

[Reporter] Withdrawal is binding. Is the peace they are demanding also binding?

[Al-'Allaf] No. This is what we have been telling the Israelis. When we demand Israel commit itself to withdrawal, we are demanding implementation of a clear, explicit paragraph of Resolution 242. It must implement this part irrespective of whether or not it would get something in return. This is because aggression and occupation, which is a constant act of aggression, must not be rewarded, especially since the territory from which Israel is required to withdraw is Arab territory; we are telling Israel to give us territory from its side before we agree to make peace with you. We want Israel to withdraw from the territory it occupied in 1967 through aggression, or at least illegally. This is because Resolution 242 does not accept this occupation. When we say that we are ready for peace with Israel, and even for full peace with Israel, this would be one of each side's national, sovereign options. In accordance with Resolution 242, this is not one of our obligations. Resolution 242 only requires terminating the state of war. However, since their coordination meeting in Damascus in July 1992, all Arab parties issued their important declaration saying that if Israel fully withdraws from all the territories it occupied in 1967 and if it acknowledges the Palestinian people's national rights, then the Arab sides can reach peace agreements with Israel which can be recorded at the UN Security Council and guaranteed by the United Nations.

Syria opted for peace on the condition that Israel honor its obligations without looking for rewards—namely complete withdrawal from the territories it conquered in 1967. Israel says it is willing to vacate the occupied land, but stops short of committing itself to a total pullout. Instead, it ties withdrawal to unacceptable demands, including secure and recognized borders. These are stipulated in UN Security Council Resolution 242, but withdrawal itself does not entail secure and recognized borders. On the contrary, Resolution 242 states that once Israel vacates the territories it occupied in 1967, the

sides may mutually agree on their respective right to live within secure and recognized borders. Secure and recognized borders may be obtained only as the outcome of Israel returning to the fold of international legitimacy, specifically by implementing Resolution 242. Only then will the notion of secure and recognized borders be obtained for both Israel and the Arab parties.

[Reporter] How do you see the way out? Is it, do you think, the full partner role promised by the United States?

[Al-'Allaf] This is supposed to be the case. As one of the two cosponsors, the United States has played host to the peace talks for over a year now. As a major power sponsoring the peace process and given that Washington maintains the kind of distinguished ties with Israel that allows the United States to sway Israel, the Americans may bring this clout into play, and I am not using the word pressure. This is to bring Israel around to the fact that its compliance with the underlying principles and conditions of the peace process, as well as with UN resolutions, will advance its interests. We know from experience how the United States reacts when a UN Security Council resolution is violated. What I am saying is that the United States ought to distance itself from double standards, especially when it comes to the country with which it has distinguished and close relations. Washington must convince Israel that obligating itself to Resolutions 242 and 338—the land-for- peace formula, that is—should further both its own interests and peace, as well as those of the United States and the Arabs. Israel must declare that it is prepared to vacate all the territories it conquered in 1967.

[Reporter] Briefly, what about the other tracks?

[Al-'Allaf] I dare say that no meaningful headway has been registered along any of the tracks.

[Reporter] There had been a good deal of optimism that the Palestinian track might see movement. Is this optimism ...

[Al-'Allaf, interrupting] That is correct, especially given that the Palestinians were invariably led to focus on procedural and less-than-substantive matters. It had been hoped following a four-month break in the peace talks—indeed promises were made—that immediately upon the return of the Palestinians to the negotiating table, along with their fellow Arabs, Israel would adopt a fresh and more serious approach to the discussions. Sadly, this failed to materialize; or it may be that Israel made a half-hearted effort to fulfill these promises. Progress on none of the tracks gives us grounds to say that Israel was forthcoming enough for this process to move forward. Israel remains the stumbling block impeding progress. We just hope the cosponsors, particularly the United States, will draw the logical conclusions.

[Reporter] One last question, Dr. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf. There is a concern preoccupying the minds of the people of this region and indeed elsewhere in the world: Is peace coming to the region that has been beset by half a century of tribulations?

[Al-'Allaf] As the case has always been, this depends as much on us as on others. On our side, we—all the Arab parties, the Syrian Arab side in particular—have proven our serious intentions for peace. This is because we have opted for peace not out of weakness or under pressure, but out of a conviction borne from well-known changes that have swept the world recently. However, our adoption of the peace option in no way means that we will acquiesce to conditions that compromise Arab constants and rights. For peace to come to the region, Israel will have to withdrawal from the last inch of Arab territory it occupied in 1967 and recognize the national rights of the Palestinian Arab people. Short of that, a just, general, and enduring peace in the region will remain out of reach. This is the only route to a comprehensive, just, and durable peace. If Israel fails to vacate the occupied territories voluntarily, the international community—above all the major powers promoting the notion of a new world order, which have stepped in during less acute crises, admittedly at times more volatile than the more than half a century old Arab-Israeli dispute—must move to get Israel to honor international legitimacy and cease its ongoing aggression against Arab rights and territory.

[Reporter] Dr. Muwaffaq al-'Allaf, chief Syrian delegate to the Washington peace talks: Thank you for your time.

[Al-'Allaf] Thank you.

10th Round Expected To Fail

JN2005081593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0445 GMT 20 May 93

[From the press review]

[Text] Under the headline "A Futile Wagering," AL-BA'TH says: Israel has been trying to achieve in the talks—through games and deception—what it failed to achieve by war and aggression; namely, to subjugate Arab will into accepting occupation and its plans of expansion, hegemony, and usurping Arab rights. In other words, Israel wants to turn Arab agreement to sit at the negotiating table into an opportunity to make them succumb to Israeli dictates and conditions in accordance with their plans. This illusion leads the Tel Aviv rulers to escalate their maneuvering and deceptions in the talks.

AL-BA'TH says: In order to maintain its claim that it is a government of peace, as it propagated during the Israeli elections which toppled the Shamir government, the Rabin government gave the impression after the ninth round of talks that it was not responsible for the failure of this round. It claimed that the ninth round was serious and positive and that substantial issues were discussed.

AL-BA'TH adds: The behavior of the Rabin government in the talks is a continuation of its behavior since it came

to power in the occupied territory. The escalating massacres, detentions, deportations, demolishing of houses, besieging villages and camps, the insistence on not returning the 400 deportees, and the daily killing of Palestinian citizens indicate the hysteria the Rabin government is experiencing in trying to impose its will and hegemony and to cancel the other party in the equation of the peace talks.

AL-BA'TH says: Without doubt, this very clear element of the talks requires the cosponsors of the peace process, particularly the United States, to adopt a clear and open stand to prevent continuous Israeli tampering with this process. If the talks continue and if the tenth round materializes, this failure will be repeated if the United States does not assume its full role in forcing Israel to abide by the bases of the peace process and if the Rabin government does not clearly announce its acceptance of the land for peace principle and full withdrawal from the occupied Arab territory.

Concluding, AL-BA'TH says: Concern for continuing the talks, strong abidance by the bases of the peace process, and not relinquishing an iota of land and rights are inherent in the Arab position.

Al-Ahmar Confers With '10 Palestinian Factions'

JN1905182893 (Clandestine) Al-Quds Palestinian Arab Radio in Arabic 1630 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] 'Abdallah al-Ahmar, assistant secretary general of the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party [in Syria], has received the leaders of the 10 Palestinian factions [opposed to the Arab-Israeli peace talks]. They are: Ahmad Jibril, secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command; 'Isam al-Qadi, secretary general of the Organization of the Popular Liberation War Vanguards, al-Sa'iqah Forces; Abu-Musa [Sa'id Musa Muragha], secretary of the Palestine National Liberation Movement, Fatah; Khalid 'Abd-al-Majid, secretary general of the Palestinian Popular Struggle Front; 'Arabi 'Awwad, secretary general of the Palestinian Revolutionary Communist Party; Fathi Ibrahim al-Shaqaqi, secretary general of the Islamic Jihad Movement; Abu-'Ali Mustafa, assistant secretary general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine; Fahd Sulayman, member of the Political Bureau of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine; 'Ali 'Aziz, member of the Political Bureau of the Palestine Liberation Front; and Mustafa al-Liddawi, representative of the Islamic Resistance Movement.

Discussion during the meeting revolved around the latest political developments on various levels, notably those pertaining to the Palestine question; the national and pan-Arab struggle; the situation in Palestine; and the glorious popular intifadah and ways of enhancing it in the face of the Zionist enemy.

'Abdallah al-Ahmar stressed the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party's support for the Palestinian people's just struggle and their glorious intifadah to achieve their inalienable national rights, foremost among them being the right to repatriation, self-determination, the establishment of their independent state on all their national soil, and the promotion of national and pan-Arab struggle against plans to harm our nation's will and future.

The leaders of the 10 Palestinian factions stressed their firm adherence to the full rights of our people, as well as the need to continue the Palestinian struggle, reinforce the popular intifadah, and reject the self-administration conspiracy and the policy of settlement and displacement.

Afghanistan

Pakistani Source: Factions Agree to Cease-Fire

BK1905102293 Hong Kong AFP in English 1014 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, May 19 (AFP)—Leaders of Afghanistan's main feuding factions agreed Wednesday on a two-month ceasefire and are to set up a commission to find a durable solution to the present conflict within that time, an official Pakistani source said here.

There was no confirmation from Afghan sources.

Fighting between forces loyal to Prime Minister-designate Golboddin Hekmatyar and Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud was still raging for control of Kabul early Wednesday.

A Defense Ministry spokesman in Kabul said he had unconfirmed reports of an agreement to end the eight-day-old battle but no details.

The main faction leaders have been meeting for two weeks in the Afghan city of Jalalabad, between Kabul and the Pakistan border, in an attempt to thrash out their differences, centering on the fate of Mas'ud.

Hekmatyar, who was named prime minister at an all-party conference in Islamabad in March, has refused to have Mas'ud, a personal foe, in his cabinet.

Mas'ud is backed by President Borhanoddin Rabbani, who is resisting the idea of him being replaced by a defence committee which Hekmatyar would dominate.

Further on Cease-Fire, Cabinet

BK1905151193 Hong Kong AFP in English 1456 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Peshawar, Pakistan, May 19 (AFP)—Afghan leaders have agreed on a ceasefire in Kabul as well as on the composition of a government under premier-designate Golboddin Hekmatyar, sources close to their Jalalabad talks said Wednesday .

The leaders, who have been meeting in the eastern Afghan city since April 30, also decided to form a commission to oversee the implementation of the cease-fire, the sources said.

Another commission would be established to prepare for elections as agreed in the peace accord signed in Islamabad in March with the joint mediation of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

One source said the leaders had finished "75 percent" of the work on forming the two commissions after putting together a cabinet list on Tuesday.

Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani will unveil the details of the settlement at a news conference in Jalalabad in the next few days, the sources said.

The 18-day old talks in Jalalabad have continued under the shadow of fierce fighting between rival factions for control of Kabul, which has left several dead and some 3,900 people injured over the past eight days.

The talks have brought together chiefs or representatives of nine Afghan mojahedin factions including the eight which initialled the Islamabad accord.

It was not known whether Ahmad Shah Mas'ud would continue as defence minister under the Jalalabad understanding, or whether an alternative was hammered out to overcome the thorny issue.

A previous list of ministers drawn up by Hekmatyar soon after the signing of the Islamabad accord was rejected by Rabbani because it sought to replace his ally Mas'ud at the defence ministry.

No Sign of Cease-Fire; Kabul Fighting Continues

BK1905123893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1139 GMT 19 May 93

[By Terence White]

[Text] Kabul, May 19 (AFP)—A reported ceasefire failed to stop the fighting in Kabul Wednesday, which saw a long-range rocket slam into one of the city's main hospitals.

The 200-bed Military Hospital took a direct hit on a fuel store at the rear, injuring only two people slightly but causing a large fire and serious damage.

Defence Ministry spokesman General Yunes Qanuni indicated that the warring troops loyal to Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud and to Premier-designate Golboddin Hekmatyar had received no orders to lay down their arms.

An official Pakistani source in Peshawar said Wednesday that Afghan faction leaders meeting in Jalalabad had agreed on a two- month ceasefire as part of a plan to end the political conflict behind the fighting.

But Qanuni said, "the rockets exploding in Kabul are not the rockets of the leaders but the rockets of the mojahedin."

Damage to the Military Hospital, one of five hospitals in the city, was heavy, serious.

"We have lost the laboratory, dental and eye departments, physiotherapy wing, maternity ward and more than half of the polyclinic," said a senior doctor who preferred not to be named.

"We managed to control the fire and we don't have to evacuate the patients," he said.

However most of the 100 mixed civilian and military patients opted to leave the hospital because of the danger of rockets, eye- witnesses at the scene said.

"In the name of the 40 doctors who service this hospital I ask the other side to stop bombarding the city because our people are fed-up," the doctor pleaded.

The rocket was fired by Hekmatyar's forces south of Kabul and was apparently aimed at Defence Ministry artillery on the mountain which bisects the city. Many of the missiles overshoot and fall on residential areas.

The Military Hospital had already been hit three times since the latest battles began more than a week ago, losing its operating theatre and generator.

With assistance from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the generator was repaired and diesel fuel donated, but the operating theatre is still disabled.

A soldier in the vicinity reported 20 rockets had been fired at the mountain range before noon, of which seven had landed near the hospital.

"These mountains are the cause of too many innocent people being killed," he said.

There were no immediate reports of deaths Wednesday, but Radio Kabul reported 140 rockets and mortar bombs had been fired into the capital Tuesday, killing 34 people and wounding 126.

The radio had reported 53 killed and 119 wounded by 58 rockets Monday.

ICRC figures showed hospital admittances for the first week of fighting in Kabul were just over 3,900, most of them civilians. No reliable figures exist for the cumulative death toll but they are certainly in the hundreds.

Qanuni said Defense Ministry jet attacks over the past few days had silenced most of the opposing heavy weapons, which had resulted in a lessening of the bombardment of Kabul.

He said the military situation had "changed in favour of the government," which was now making an offensive against the rival factions, although reports from frontline soldiers indicated little real change.

In the far southwest of Kabul, troops loyal to Mas'ud at Dasht-e Barchi reported capturing some positions of Hekmatyar's allies, the Iranian-backed Shi'ite Hezb-e Wahadat [Islamic Unity Party] faction, but with serious losses.

No confirmation of the ceasefire agreement was available here. The Pakistani source in Peshawar said the feuding factions had also decided to set up a commission to find a durable solution to the conflict within two months.

The faction leaders have been meeting for more than two weeks in Jalalabad, between Kabul and the Pakistan border, in an attempt to thrash out their differences, centering on the fate of Mas'ud.

Hekmatyar, who was named prime minister at an all-party conference in Islamabad in March, has refused to have Mas'ud, a personal foe, in his cabinet.

Mas'ud is backed by President Borhanoddin Rabbani, who is resisting the idea of him being replaced by a defence committee which Hekmatyar would dominate.

Unconfirmed reports here earlier this week said one plan was to have Rabbani take the Defence Ministry and Hekmatyar the Interior Ministry. After two months local commanders in the Afghan provinces would vote on the new set-up.

Hekmatyar, Mas'ud Enmity Said Behind Fighting

BK1905125493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1047 GMT 19 May 93

[By Herve Clerc]

[Text] Islamabad, May 19 (AFP)—A deep hatred between two men irreconcilably divided by ethnic origin, political vision, temperament and a bitter [word indistinct] of treachery and death is at the heart of the fighting which is devastating Kabul.

The two are Defence Minister Ahmad Shah Mas'ud and fundamentalist leader Golboddin Hekmatyar.

Mas'ud, 40, the "Lion of Panjshir," is a Tajik whose ten years spent fighting in the jihad against the Soviet Army made him a legendary hero, and is first and foremost an Afghan nationalist.

He is a man who always draws a clear line between those who stayed to fight and suffered the wrath of the the Russians inside Afghanistan, as he did, and those like Hekmatyar who directed the war from Peshawar, in Pakistan.

Hekmatyar, 44, a Pashtun, is in contrast primarily a man of Islam, though he does use the "Pashtun card" to rally followers against the northern ethnic groups such as the Tajiks and Uzbeks who currently control the center of Kabul.

A disciple of Maulana Maududi, the Pakistani Sunni revivalist teacher, Hekmatyar espouses an internationalist ideology in which Islamic solidarity must prevail over tribal, ethnic and national considerations.

Hundreds of Arabs have fought, and some are still fighting with his party, the Hezb-e Eslami (Islamic Party), which has direct links to Pakistan's main fundamentalist Jamaat-i Islami.

The two men are both fervent Moslems, but if Mas'ud seems open to compromise, Hekmatyar has a holistic vision of the future Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, in which every facet of life would be ruled by the Koran and by Shariya law.

Each man is tireless and has a charisma that can sway crowds and elicit undivided sacrifice. But there the similarity ends.

Mas'ud is vivacious and highly strung, generous in nature and with his time and words, which he accompanies with eloquent hand gestures.

Hekmatyar, with a reputation for implacability to his enemies, is impassive, secretive and guarded in word and deed.

Both have been ravaged by the unending offensives and counter- offensives by the rival factions which fell out almost immediately after their combined efforts overthrew the communist regime in April of 1992.

Their men are exhausted. Their popularity is at an all time low. And today the people in the rubble of the bazaars of Kabul openly rue the loss of Najibullah, the last communist president.

Mas'ud makes no secret of his hatred for Hekmatyar, whom he calls a "madman" and a "dictator," a man drunk with power who will do anything to get it. Nor has he ever forgiven Hekmatyar for the death of 60 of his men in a Hezb ambush in July of 1989.

Hekmatyar, who was named prime minister in an Islamabad conference of the main factions in March but has yet to form a cabinet because of his refusal to include Mas'ud, says he wants only peace. But no one believes it. Should he extend one hand in seeming friendship, the other would hold a dagger.

That the two could ever work together is unthinkable. Said one expert here that for peace to come to Afghanistan: "One of the two must leave Kabul in a coffin."

Government Implements Air Strikes; Clashes Continue

LD1905153993 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1430 GMT 19 May 93

[Excerpt] Clashes between rival groups continued in Kabul today. According to a report by the Voice and Vision correspondent in Kabul, rival forces attacked each other's positions using heavy weaponry and missiles. Government military aircraft bombarded rival forces' positions as well as residential areas in east and west Kabul several times today. The report adds: Hospital sources have no precise details of today's casualties. [passage omitted]

Mas'ud Jets Bomb Rival Forces; Rocket Barrage Eases

BK2005084893 Hong Kong AFP in English 0818 GMT 20 May 93

[Excerpts] Kabul, May 20 (AFP)—Fighting continued though at a reduced intensity in Kabul Thursday with no sign of the ceasefire reportedly agreed by faction leaders the day before.

Jets from the Defence Ministry continued to bomb heavy weapons sites of rival mojahedin factions in and around Kabul, flying at least five sorties before noon.

But for the first time in the nine days of fighting the capital was spared the deadly barrage of scores of missiles which have resulted in more than 4,000 hospitalised casualties and an estimated hundreds of dead.

However at least 15 rockets, apparently fired from areas of south Kabul occupied by mojahedin loyal to Prime Minister-designate Golboddin Hekmatyar, smashed into the northern Wazir Akbar Khan diplomatic enclave early morning. [passage omitted]

Despite the bombing, bursts of smoke and dust on the mountain in the middle of Kabul indicated Defence Ministry positions were still coming under fire from the opposing heavy artillery of Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Eslami [Islamic Party] faction and its allies, the Iranian-backed Hezb-e Wahdat [Islamic Unity Party].

But with the reduced bombardments the streets of Kabul were relatively active, with some shops and the money-market open and way-side vendors operating, although the Post Office and cinemas remained closed.

Meanwhile official sources expressed ignorance of a cease-fire agreement reportedly reached Wednesday at a meeting of the nine main factions in the city of Jalalabad.

But Defence Ministry spokesman General Yunus Qanooni called an unusual press conference for later Thursday.

Sources close to the Jalalabad talks said Wednesday the leaders had agreed to stop the fighting for control of Kabul and to form a commission to implement the ceasefire.

Another commission would prepare for elections as agreed in the peace accord signed in Islamabad in March by eight of the factions with the joint mediation of Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

One source said the leaders, who have been meeting in the eastern Afghan city since April 30 in a bid to resolve the country's political crisis, had finished "75 percent" of the work on forming the two commissions after putting together a cabinet list on Tuesday.

President Borhanoddin Rabbani will unveil the details of the settlement at a news conference in Jalalabad in the next few days, the sources said.

It was not known whether Ahmed Shah Mas'ud, Hekmatyar's bitter foe, would continue as defence minister under the Jalalabad understanding, or whether an alternative was hammered out to overcome the thorny issue.

A previous list of ministers drawn up by Hekmatyar soon after the signing of the Islamabad accord was rejected by Rabbani because it sought to replace his ally Mas'ud at the Defence Ministry.

Bangladesh

PRC Air Force Chief Visits Defense Staff College

BK1905154893 Dhaka Radio Bangladesh Network in Bengali 1430 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Visiting commander of the Chinese Air Force, Lieutenant General Cao Shuangming, visited the Defense Services Command and Staff College located in the Mirpur area of Dhaka City this morning. General Cao and members of his delegation were received by Major General Mohammed Mahmudur Rahman, commandant of the college. They held talks on the training programs of the college. Later, General Cao and members of his delegation visited the Bangladesh Air Force base, Zahurul Haq, in Chittagong.

Paper Views Adverse Effects of Burmese Refugees

BK1905144193 Dhaka DAINIK ITTEFAQ in Bengali 15 May 93 p 2

[Editorial: "Problems of the Rohingya Refugees"]

[Text] A Memorandum of Understanding, MOU, was signed between the Bangladesh Government and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR, in Dhaka on May 12 on the repatriation of the Rohingya refugees. The accord was signed on behalf of the government by the foreign secretary, Mr. Reaz Rahman, while Dr. Sadako Ogata. signed it on behalf of the UNHCR. The MOU emphasizes that the repatriation should be voluntary.

The Burmese Government is pledge bound to take back the refugees. In April last year, the UN secretary general, Dr. Butrus-Ghali, said he received a guarantee from Burma that it will take back the refugees under UN supervision. But it is unfortunate that until last month only 23,123 refugees have been repatriated. The total number of Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh exceeds 250,000. Bangladesh authorities have so far sent a list of 227,741 refugees to the Burmese authorities to obtain clearance for repatriation but they have agreed to take back only 98,865.

It may be mentioned that there are three categories of citizens in Burma. The bonafide citizens of Burma are those whose predecessors permanently resided in that country before the Anglo- Burmese war of 1823. According to this provision of the Burmese constitution all Rohingyas are entitled to become first class citizens of that country. In the year 1982 the Citizenship Act of Burma was amended and Rohingyas were indentified as floating or guest citizens. On the basis of this amendment the Rohingyas were evicted from their homes and obstacles have been created for their repatriation.

A majority of the refugees are not willing to go back. Violence has also broken out in several refugee camps located in Cox's Bazaar centering on their repatriation. The refugees asked what guarantees there are that they will get back their homes and properties if they go back. For this reason they are demanding repatriation under UN supervision. But the Burmese Government does not want UN involvement in the repatriation process. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees, Dr. Ogata, has said that her organization will make efforts to convince the Burmese Government in this regard. A large number of the refugees will not agree to voluntary repatriation unless their security is ensured.

Bangladesh is facing manifold problems due to the long stay of Rohingya refugees in the country. It has been alleged that a large number of them have mingled with the local population. They are also destroying the country's forest reserves and this has created an adverse reaction in the minds of the people of Bangladesh. For this reason the Bangladesh Government has become keen to send them back as soon as possible. But it is not being possible due to the go slow policy adopted by the Burmese Government.

Observers feel that voluntary repatriation of the Rohingyas will be possible only if the ban on them as illegal citizens is lifted and they are given the right to self-determination. Once this is ensured their repatriation should be made under UN supervision. We hope that the international community will make sincere efforts to resolve this problem.

India

Israel's Peres Pleased With Results of Visit

TA1905104493 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 19 May 93 p A6

["Exclusive" report by Avital Mossinshohn, AFP, and political correspondent]

[Excerpts] Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres wrapped up his 44-hour visit to New Delhi, the capital of India, last night.

Interviewed by HA'ARETZ shortly before his departure, Peres said the results of the visit had exceeded all his expectations. In his opinion, the prospects for economic and political development in bilateral relations are greater than with any other big country in the world.

Peres confirmed that India undertook to mediate between Israel and Muslim countries in Southeast Asia. This apparently refers to the establishment of initial relations with Indonesia and perhaps also Malaysia.

The possibility of joint immediate action by the two countries against terror was raised in Peres' meeting with Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao, at the end of which Peres phoned Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. On behalf of the Israeli Government, Peres invited Rao to visit Israel. The visit may take place this year, in addition to the visit of the Indian ministers of culture and agriculture scheduled for next month.

Peres noted that the visit to India provided an opportunity for a big outburst of sympathy toward Israel, which had apparently existed all the time. "The Indian Government did not rush to formalize relations for fear of its 140-million Muslim minority. It, too, was taken by surprise by the warm reception accorded to me here and by the lack of any tangible criticism on the part of Muslim circles," he said. [passage omitted]

AFP reports that at a news conference prior to his departure, Peres voiced Israel's support for India's position on the Kashmir question. "We support India's integrity. Any attempt to curtail this integrity will cause problems and lead to a bloodbath," he said.

Our political correspondent adds that at the end of the Peres-Rao meeting it was announced that Israel and India would jointly operate aid programs to the CIS. The two officials reviewed the six agreements signed during the visit and the accords attained by the two countries. [passage omitted]

Commentary Welcomes Vice President's UK Visit

BK1605040493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 16 May 93

[Commentary by correspondent M.P. Radhakrishnan]

[Text] India and Britain entered a new phase of close cooperation when the British prime minister, Mr. John Major, visited New Delhi in January this year. Britain's strong support to India in combating terrorism and its call for an end to external assistance to Kashmiri militants reflect its clear perception of the situation in the subcontinent. Over the last one year, a number of high-level visits took place between the two countries to maintain a regular bilateral dialogue at all levels. The 12-day official visit of the vice president, Mr. K.R. Narayanan, will no doubt further strengthen the understanding and rapport between the two countries.

Two major factors which have led to closer links between India and Britain are the mutuality of interest on the economic front and the common concern on the issue of terrorism. While India is liberalizing its economy to attract foreign investment, British companies, hit by the current recession in the West, have been looking for collaboration with developing countries like India. There are favorable indications of a large-scale British investment in India in sectors like power, telecommunications and food processing, particularly after the visit of a high-level business delegation to New Delhi along with John Major.

On the issue of terrorism, India is the first Commonwealth country with which Britain has signed an extradition treaty and a comprehensive confiscation agreement. The Parliament in its just concluded session adopted a bill to bring into effect these agreements which could act as a strong deterrent to extremist elements taken refuge in the UK.

Reports from London indicate that the vice president's visit is being viewed with considerable importance by the British Government. Mr. Narayanan's meeting with Mr. John Major on the 24th of this month is expected to be a substantive one and they are likely to touch upon matters of both bilateral and international importance. One of the highlights of Mr. Narayanan's stay in Britain will be his interaction with renowned academicians, members of the India League and the India-UK parliamentary group. The vice president is to deliver several lectures on subjects as varied as democracy, the new wrold order and the environment and participate in a discussion on the late renowned political scientist Mr. Harold Lasky, who had taught Mr. Narayanan.

Germany To Supply Additional Aid for 1993

BK1905162093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] India is to get an additional aid of about 785 crore rupees from Germany this year. This was announced at the end of the annual bilateral negotiations on development cooperation in New Delhi today. This commitment is more than last year's assistance. Germany has also agreed to release undisbursed funds from earlier commitment for the expansion of Neyveli Lignite Mines and some other projects. With this, the total German assistance for 1993 goes to nearly 1,200 crore rupees. Our correspondent says today's announcement of German assistance will go a long way in supporting the economic reforms program. Social service sectors like health, rural water supply and basic education as also watershed management are among the areas covered under the German aid.

JKLF Leader Asks Pakistan To Withdraw From Kashmir

BK1905164893 Hong Kong AFP in English 1503 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Jammu, India, May 19 (AFP)—A Kashmiri Moslem militant suffered a heart attack here Wednesday after asking Pakistan to withdraw from the northern third of the disputed territory to facilitate a settlement.

Yasin Malik, who heads the outlawed Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front (JKLF), collapsed after making a statement inside a court where he was to go on trial under India's tough terrorist laws.

Malik, 29, was immediately taken to hospital by jail officials who had escorted him. Doctors said he suffered a mild heart attack.

Earlier, Malik told reporters that Islamabad should give up its claims to Kashmir in order to bring back normalcy in the region, divided between Pakistan and India.

Malik also indicated that the JKLF would step up its activities to achieve secession from India.

"The ultimate solution should be acceptable to all Kashmiris," he said. "We want an independent state."

Malik faces numerous charges, including the kidnapping of a federal minister's daughter in 1989 and the murders of a former vice-chancellor and the head of a state-run engineering firm.

The JKLF is the only major rebel group to demand a totally independent Kashmir. All other Moslem groups want the Indian- controlled Kashmir to accede to Pakistan.

Meanwhile, five people, including four militants, were killed overnight and Wednesday across Kashmir in violence linked to the separatist campaign which has claimed thousands of lives.

A young militant was shot dead at a graveyard on Tuesday in Srinagar, Kashmir's summer capital, while trying to evade Indian soldiers who had ringed the area to catch suspected guerrillas, officials said.

Another man was killed when he was caught in a gunbattle between separatists and troops in downtown Srinagar Wednesday. Two rebels died in a firefight with security forces in Kupwara District Tuesday.

A fourth militant died in an internecine clash in Srinagar.

Kashmiri militants have been waging a four-year-old separatist campaign to seek independence from India. India accuses Pakistan of arming and training the rebels, but Islamabad denies the charge.

Five Commando Battalions Assigned to Punjab Police

BK2005085893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] In Punjab, five fully trained commando battalions have been inducted permanently into the state police to help combat militancy. This was announced by the Director General of Police [DGP], Mr. K.P.S. Gill, at Faridkot last night. Mr. Gill said that immediate action was taken on complaints of alleged police excesses. The DGP said the operation to cleanse the police force of corruption and negligence will continue.

Meanwhile, seven militants, including one hard-core militant Lakshman Singh Khurd, were killed in separate encounters with security forces in the state since last night. According to an official spokesman, Lakshman Singh and his accomplice were killed in an encounter in Barnala area of Sangrur District. Elsewhere in the state, two militants were killed in Sangrur District and two in Ludhiana District. Another militant committed suicide by consuming poison when security forces trapped him in Suhian area of Ludhiana District last night.

Scattered Violence Reported in By-Elections

BK1905161893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 19 May 93

[Excerpts] Polling in the by-election to two Lok Sabha and 16 assembly constituencies in eight states which ended this evening was by and large peaceful. In Bihar, barring stray incidents of violence and group clashes, polling went on smoothly in the Patna Lok Sabha constituency and Garhwa and Goh assembly constituencies. In Patna, police had to fire at a violent mob indulging in booth capturing in which one person was killed. Nearly 40 percent of voters exercised their franchise.

In Punjab, polling in the Jullundur parliamentary constituency remained peaceful except a few cases of impersonation. Between 45 to 55 percent voters exercised their franchise. In Andhra Pradesh, polling in the Kovur and Kaikalur assembly constituencies passed off peacefully. In Kovur, about 70 percent of the electorate cast their votes. In Kaikalur, about 65 percent of the electorate exercised their franchise. In Gujarat, polling was peaceful except for a few incidents of violence in six assembly seats. Snatching of ballot papers in some polling stations of Kundla and Ellis Bridge assembly constituencies has been reported. Between 45 and 50 percent of voters cast their votes. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, the Congress-I in a statement issued in Patna this evening charged the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party] and the Janata Dal of booth capturing and demanded repoll. At the same time, the BJP has alleged booth capturing by the Janata Dal activists in several polling stations in Patna. Briefing newsmen in New Delhi today, the party vice president, Mr. K.R. Malkani, said complaints of poll violence have been filed with the Election Commission.

Minister on Foreign Exchange Reserves

BK1905161693 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] The finance minister says the country's economy is looking up despite financial constraints. Dr. Manmohan Singh was addressing a news conference in Shillong this evening during his one-day visit to Meghalaya. He said the foreign exchange reserves now stand at $7 billion and the economic growth last year was 4 percent. Referring to the northeast, Dr. Singh said the Center wants to reduce and ultimately eliminate the imbalances between this region and the rest of the country. The five-year tax holiday given for setting up of industries in the region is a pointer in this direction, he added.

Effect of Budget, Appointments on Defense Viewed

BK1405110393 Delhi INDIAN DEFENCE REVIEW in English Apr 93 pp 41-44

[Article by Rear Admiral Satyindra Singh, retired: "Playing with Fire: Taking Defence Matters for Granted"]

[Text] Every year during the budget session of the Parliament our lawmakers happily accept the guillotine on the debate on demands for grants of various ministries. There is not a murmur nor even a feeble attempt to debate the need or otherwise, of very large sums of monies being virtually given away as dole. As a national daily mentioned in its editorial on 1 May, 1992 that it is a slur on our parliamentary democracy when the Lok Sabha approves without discussion the demands for grants relating to as many as 35 ministries/departments and six Union Territories, in a matter of ten minutes, when the budget session usually lasts something like 10 weeks. On that day the Parliament approved budgetary demands totalling Rs. [rupees] 2,33,398 crores. But even this was an improvement over the previous year when only three ministries/departments were taken up by the House in any detail! Imagine, that among the ministries guillotined last year were Defence, Home, Information and Broadcasting, Industry, Health and Family Planning. On the other hand there was wide spread criticism of the neglect and downgrading of socially useful expenditure in both, the planned and nonplanned areas of the budget, (when the new economic policy was ushered in).

One of the major powers that gives Parliament supremacy over the executive is essentially the power of the purse—the authority to grant or withold the supply of funds. The spectre of a cut motion hanging over the prime ministerial head usually brings in desired results when the opposition is alert. That is why the demands of each ministry are expected to be discussed in detail by the representatives of the people and the idea is to ensure that they have a say in the way the government allocates funds to various ministries. Who is to blame for Parliament not exercising this right? To a large extent, the government is at fault because it does not properly plan how it should utilise its time in the House. But the Opposition is no less to be blamed because it seldom regrets that the demands of various ministries are approved without discussion. Most opposition parties are interested only in issues which hit media headlines: the fallout of which is a surfeit of empty rhetoric and loss of time. Not that Bofors or Ayodhya should not be discussed in the House, but the elected representatives obviously fail in their duty if they do not keep a watch on how the government spends the tax payers' money especially during the budget session. Thereafter they are not alert to supplemantary expenditures later in the financial year. In order that Parliament is more responsive to the peoples' interests and the government and its bureaucrats are more accountable to Parliament for the huge annual disbursement of funds, the obvious answer has been to divide the labour between the House and Select Committees. Such committees have proved their worth in countries like Britain, which had introduced them to cope with the complexities of governing. There have been many meetings and discussions on this subject in many fora, but it remains to be seen whether we opt for such committees in our parliamentary system or continue with the existing guillotine routine.

Allocations for Defence in this year's budget.

In the financial year 1993-94, there has only been a marginal increase in the defence budget. Theoretically, the increase from Rs. 17,500 crores in 1992-93 to Rs. 19,180 crores reflects a 9.6 per cent rise. But when one takes into account the current rate of inflation at 7 per cent, the real increase in defence expenditure would be just above 2 per cent. The components of the 1993-94 defence outlay are: Army-Rs 9,425.46 crores; Navy-Rs 1,125.12 crores; Air Force-Rs 3064.49 crores; ordnance factories-Rs. 65.10 crores and capital outlay for all these services in Rs 5499.53 crores. Interestingly, while there was a decline of Rs 209 crores in defence capital expenditure for 1992-93, the revenue expenditure side went up by the same amount; thus the budget estimates and the revised estimates for defence in 1992-93 remained perfectly matched.

In this year's allocation too, the Army has got a major share of the defence budget in view of the size of its manpower compared to the Navy and the Air Force. Its Budget has been raised by 7 per cent from Rs. 8,772.97 crores to Rs. 9,425.46 crores, an increase of Rs. 653 crores. For the first time, the Air Force gets a major rise of about 20 per cent, with its budget being raised to Rs. 3,064.49 crores from the current year's revised budgetary estimates of Rs. 2532.99 crores—an increase of about Rs. 531.50 crores. Such a big increase in the Air Force's share is because of the higher cost of equipment in this technology intensive force. A major expenditure lies ahead for the Air Force as it plans to induct an advance jet trainer. The Air Force has been allocated an additional Rs. 1,615.77 crores for capital outlay on aircraft and aero-engines. The Navy has been given a 13 per cent rise in its budgetary allocation of Rs. 1,125.92 crores as compared to the current year's revised estimates of Rs. 994.34 crores—an increase of Rs. 131.7 crores.

In the overall interest of economy it is understandable for each ministry and department to have a look (if not relook) to determine what head of expenditure can be axed, particularly since the nation has to cater for basic necessities like drinking water, education and housing for a massive population, about half of which lives below the official poverty line. It is well known that all the three Service Headquarters meticulously go through every item and must be one of the few segments of our national apparatus which takes this task of preparing draft proposals seriously. But we observe that even at the highest governmental levels there is scant regard for economising on waste expenditure. In an overall high wastage economy the Government itself displays an alarming fiscal profigacy. For example, the Union Council of Ministers seems to be excessively fond of expending government money. The media has done well to highlight their frivolous and extended visits abroad which provide no service to the nation. Their expenses in this respect have exceeded the 1992 budgetary provisions of Rs. 5.50 crores by 536 percent, costing the exchequer Rs 35 crores. Their expenses at home too have exceeded the

budgetary allocation for hospitality (sumptuary and other expenses) for 1992-93. The Finance Minister had sanctioned Rs 83 lakhs, but the revised estimates show that the bill has shot up to Rs 98 lakhs, despite a helping hand lent by the public sector undertakings in the shape of unaccountable transport and lavish hospitality which is provided in the most liberal measure. The officials are not too far behind. The Prime Minister's Office (PMO) leading the pack, has exceeded it's budgetary allocation by nearly 35 per cent. The result is that the Finance Ministerhas been forced to increase budgetary provisions for his worthy colleagues by about 250 per cent, this time round. So much for the tall talk about austerity which is selectively applied in any case!

One would like to believe that our policy makers have taken all external and internal factors into consideration and that aims and vital security considerations have been accounted for in their entirely while framing the defence budget. Here it becomes pertinent to quote paragraph 7 of the 19th Estimates Committee (1992-93) Report which says: "The Committee have felt that the existing Policy which is 'to defend the territorial integrity of the country' is a needless oversimplification". They have also expressed dismay over the fact that suddenly emerging situations like the Gulf War of 1990-91 should have thrown the country's defence planning into disarray; or that the country should have fought four wars and launched armed operations in and at the request of neighbouring countries without a clearly articulated and integrate defence policy. The Committee have therefore stresse the need for a clear and comprehensive defence policy based on a viable national security doctrine. In the same context the Committee have recommended that a review and rationalisation of the Official Secrets Act be carried out to facilitate a more meaningful debate on national security matters. The Committee have suggested revival of the dormant National Security Council for holistic direction of national security affairs. From this perspective the Committee have desired that the defence policy makers should take greater note of emerging threats tc the country from air and sea. A few years ago, a Britis parliamentarian described the British national policy or defence cutbacks as a 'Comedy of Errors'! One sincerely hopes that in our case the dwindling budgetary allocations for our Armed Forces do not prove to be a 'Tragedy ol Errors'! In simplistic terms the threat today is an extanl 'Threat of War' compounded by a siege situation within, with the latter ingredient assuming alarming proportions day by day. An extremely high expenditure—hidden or otherwise—on this secondary role of the Armed Forces is now making nonsense of allocations as well as savings measures put into effect. The nation will watch with interest the contribution of our lawmakers when the defence budget is discussed this time (if at all).

A well known columnist, during a recent visit to Pakistan, was given the impression by a number of Pakistanis that they believed that once the number of Indian soldiers, in Kashmir reached 4,00,000 the cost for India would be so high that it would be forced to quit the territory, as Washington did during the Vietnam War. (It must be added here that there is no comparison whatsoever between Vietnam and Kashmir).

The Defence Apparatus

That the man behind the machine is the ultimate factor in any situation requires no reiteration; and that this is particularly so in the case of the defence services is also well known. But the machines have also to be borne in mind at all times because they are crucial forthe effective performance of the soldier, the sailor and the airman.

Our defence apparatus has three main branches—the military, civil and finance (defence). They have well defined roles but in practice, they have been progressively marginalised with regard to decision making in all spheres of defence activity. Politicians make wars and create conditions for internal insurgency, the bureaucrats compound them but the soldiers have to fight to retrieve the situation and uphold the honour of the nation.

The question then is how can the defence apparatus be saved from marginalisation? There has, of course, been some tinkering with the problem. One of the subcommittees of the Administrative Reforms Commission made an effort some years ago but regrettably its efforts were cosmetic in nature. Much has also been written on this subject but today matters are worse. Commenting upon the efficacy of decision making, the Report of the Estimates Committee has again pertinently observed that: "Often proposals floated for fulfilling the tasks entrusted to Defence Services are subjected to such a prolonged process of scrutiny and series of clearance(s) that it assumes the form of a hurdle race and in the bargain the Services end up with a relatively larger share of anxiety". To mitigate this situation the Committee have highlighted the need to reform the decision making process in the Ministry of Defence. To this end, they have called for greater powers to be delegated to the three Chiefs of Staff. Also, to ensure proper decentralisation coupled with rapid decision making and corresponding accountability, it has been recommended that Financial Advisers be appointed in respective Service Headquarters and at various Command/Formation levels. This, they hope, will save time and cost in bridging existing gaps in perception, specialisation and familiarity between the services and the civilian apparatusin the Ministry of Defence. In this connection they have also desired that immediate attention should be paid to imparting greater specialisation to the civilian officers of the Ministry of Defence Secretariat. Integration of the Ministry of Defence and Service Headquarters is a crying need and has also been discussed on innumberable occasions. Today, the Ministry of Defence spends Rs. 250 crores on its secretariat alone. Imagine the economy which would accrue if there was one integrated apparatus instead.

It would be instructive to illustrate how powerful the bureaucracy has become in our system. There is no better proof than the remarks of B G Deshmukh, a former Cabinet Secretary and Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister. In an interview carried in many national dailies in December 1990, he spoke of his 'success' in what he described as 'safeguarding the interests' of the senior officers of his service. He said he told Mr V P Singh, (then Prime Minister) who wanted V.C. Pande in place of T.N. Seshan (who had earlier had a very dictatorial stint as Defence Secretary) as Cabinet Secretary, that he would not issue the order of appointment until Seshan was 'properly looked after'. He even suggested that Seshan be made a member of the Planning Commission. According to Deshmukh's account, Ramakrishna Hegde, who had just been appointed Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, 'refused' to have Seshan, but this was a brief resistance. Deshmukh told Hegde that he would not clear his list of members unless Seshan's name was in it. There is much more in Deshmukh's interview, including connections with powerful business houses, which clearly explodes the persisting myth that the bureaucracy merely carries out orders and that politicians holding high offices are supreme!

Unfortunately, the Chiefs of Staff have happily accepted their attenuated positions in the defence apparatus. Remember the storm that erupted over the current Chief of the Army Staff's press interview last year in which he had rightly remarked that 'good governance is our business as well'. This generated the most uncalled for censure in Parliament by Sharad Pawar, the Defence Ministry's helmsman. It has to be remembered that the Chiefs of Staff are entitled to discuss matters of defence with the press, just as the Foreign Secretary is to discuss matters of diplomacy. Pawar regrettably slighted the GOC, 11 Corps in connection with the withdrawal of the Army from Punjab last year. His observations published in a national daily were nothing less than insulting when he said that Chibber (Lt Gen B.K.N. Chibber) did not go to the press with his permission or the ministry's and that being a solider, what ever he had conveyed to the press was not only after consulting his Army Commander, the Chief of the Army Staff and Pawar's Ministry also. To dismiss a senior field commander's views as half baked, parochial or outside his competence sent peals of joy through the bureaucratic tribe in his Ministry.

Maj Gen D.K. Palit's memoirs, 'War in the High Himalayas' recalls the colonial tradition which produced "cantonments of the mind". The Armed Forces belong to the people and their interaction with the media must be viewed in that spirit. The antiquated Official Secrets Act which has been referred to above and mentioned in the Report of the Estimates Committee, needs to be reformed urgently.

The Intelligence Set-Up

Nowhere is a salvage operation more necessary than in our intelligence set-up, which often gets identified with the regime of the day and in the process, its main function of gathering internal and external intelligence suffers to the d triment of the country's security. There have been failures galore since 1947. Each one of our military conflicts—be they mid intensity conventional wars or low intensity campaigns within and without the country—have been results of massive intelligence vacuums or gaps. The most disastrous intelligence failure led to the ill-conceived, politically contrived and poorly executed operation in aid of civil power, where all the three services were involved—'Bluestar'—at the end of which then Army Chief Gen Sundarji told the press that it was "an intelligence failure," the multiplicity of intelligence agencies in the field for many months prior notwithstanding. And now we have had a senseless tragedy of horrifying proportions in Bombay in the shape of serial bomb blasts on 12th March. Our lawmakers, predictably, among other things, have sought the creation of yet another agency to deal with such situations. This is a standard response to any crisis—the result, regrettably, is more failures! The Home Minister said the same thing in Parliament on 15th March when he promised to 'revamp' the existing organisations and give a new 'orientation' to their functioning!

As Member-Secretary of the Joint Intelligence Committee [JIC] for a period of seven years, I gained insight into the functioning of this top level intelligence coordinating entity. The main problem with the working of the JIC was the tendency of the various agencies to withhold information from it and pass it on directly to the Prime Minister or other ministers. I experienced this sustained game of one-upmanship all the time and by all the agencies. The assessments made thereafter were of little or no use to the policy makers. A former chief of the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) stated in an interview in a national daily after he relinquished his post: "The house had already been burnt down by the time the JIC made its assessments available!" As an example, I refer to an incident soon after the 1971 Indo-Pak War when the JIC planned to prepare a paper for submission to its steering committee, presided over by the Cabinet Secretary. The RAW representative in the JIC was most upset at a meeting convened to discuss this subject (where I was present) and the brief from his boss was not to participate in the deliberations if the JIC persisted in undertaking the exercise. The paper for the JIC's steering committee was, nevertheless, prepared but it had to be diluted because it was 'important' that the susceptibilities of this agency should not be hurt. Incidentally, it is on record that Jawaharlal Nehru had directed that the JIC steering committee should meet regularly to discharge its duties. A meeting once in three months was intended, but in my tenure of seven years, inspite of my best efforts, I was unable to arrange more than half a dozen meetings. I wonder how often this committee meets now! If media reports are correct, we have the unedifying spectacle of the chairman, JIC on field work

in Bombay on 'personal investigations' of the 12th March happenings instead of carrying out his task of ensuring collation and dissemination of intelligence assessments as well as 'hard' intelligence to the Government.

A vital omission in the organisation of the intelligence agencies concerns accountability. Other democratic countries like the USA and the UK have watchdog panels which regularly monitor the activities of their intelligence agencies and indeed 'pull them up' for any inadequacies noticed. A number of reports are available on the findings of the US Senate Intelligence Committee which have examined specific operations and the role of their intelligence agencies including their excesses as well as failures.

Conclusion

The Indian Armed Forces are an institution, perhaps one of the last, that the country has long been proud of. This may change, however, if politicians—unable to distinguish between policing functions and the armed forces' wider responsibilites—erode the support and confidence that the military still enjoys from much of the country's population and undermines its own sense of respect and fealty to order. Further, a loss of morale, stemming from having to operate as a gendarmerie, rather than a force raised to resist external aggression, will seriously erode their effectiveness in the vital task they have been so thoroughly trained to perform. The British policy of keeping the Indian Armed Forces isolated from the national mainstream is no longer possible nor desirable. The military cannot remain aloof from the national scene where political priorities determine the agenda and have often succeeded in weakening all the instruments of state—parliament, elections, the bureaucracy, police and judiciary—particularly in the last quarter of a century. It has to be made clear to the politicians, not only by the Chiefs of Staff but by other commanders as well, particularly as the nation is divided as never before and is tottering from one crisis to another, that the Armed Forces are the instruments of state and not of the regime in power. The nation cannot afford to have its only stable pillar and dsiciplined body of men corroded in any form.

It is the recognised prerogative of the Prime Minister to decide who should man which ministry as its political manager. Once elected, any aspirant is considered fit in all respects to take charge of any portfolio; no specialist qualifications are necessary. In the case of the Defence Ministry we have had stalwarts like Y B Chavan and Jagjivan Ram (and some others), who were not only consummate politicians but did a skillful and dexterous job of steering its functioning. Two major wars took place during their tenures and they have left a mark as competent politicians and also as able administrators. But some of their successors' penchant for politicking and running their home states by proxy absorbs most of their time at the expense of their prime responsiblity. They, in a way, could be termed as 'notional' Defence Ministers. But the result has been the further entrenchment of the bureaucrats in teh system, more enfeeblement of the CHiefs of Staff, lack of proper attention to modernisation of the Armed Forces with the most deleterious results.

Weapons Overview of Arjun Main Battle Tank

BK1705133393 Delhi INDIAN DEFENCE REVIEW in English Apr 93 pp 90-94

[Article by Major Shankar Bhaduri, retired: "Weapons Overview"]

[Text] On 1 February 1993, the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), after having witnessed a portion of the ongoing winter integrated trials of the indigenous main battle tank (MBT) ARJUN declared that it was "dynamically and firepower wise" acceptable. The third element—protection—he left out pointedly since he had seen nothing of it.

Based (perhaps) on this clearance by the COAS, the Defence Minister, Members of Parliament attached to the consultative committee of Ministry of Defence (MOD), bureaucrats and brass were given a rousing controlled demonstration on 28 February at the Mahajan Field Firing Ranges-Northern Rajasthan. The media were present.

In pre-prandial discussions, the Raksha Mantri declared that the ARJUN would be put into series production in the first half of the current calendar year depending on the availability of funds. Each tank is expected to cost Rs 70 million and Rs 2500 million has been spent in development. Equally importantly (after being prompted by the Scientific Advisor—the Secretary, Defence Research and Development Organization (DRDO)) he confirmed that the design of the ARJUN stands sealed and frozen. The initial production run is set to be 126 odd tanks making for two standard armoured regiments plus reserves.

THE BROADER PICTURE

It is often (and correctly) pointed out th at critics as well as enthusiasts are not in possession of the full facts when they either carp or crow. It is not their fault since hard and accurate information is always withheld as a matter of habit. So was the case in the demonstration followed by the dedication ceremony.

The undermentioned 'broad photo', the 'wider canvas' so to speak, is derived from unrelated utterances of notables as well as broad hints thrown hither and thither. One can be forgiven, therefore, if on synthesis a distorted 'higher intention' is derived. In no sequence of importance observe that:

—The Indian armoured fighting vehicle fleet, of which, today there are three main battle tanks (MBT) of the 39-41 tonne class, is in complete disarray on the upgradation/factory overhaul/re-engining side.

—The Russian Federation in particular and the more advanced residuals of the CIS are not playing reasonable ball with India. After having settled past 'debts' to their entire satisfaction the whole lot have been playing cagey in the matter of spares and assemblies. It might be noted that their desperate efforts at arms sales are succeeding in the complete weapons system arena. It is entirely feasible that the concerned economic and trade departments, highly centralised as they were, are not in a position to tap factories and warehouses where armaments put to the field a couple of decades back can be located, from the spares and assemblies point of view, which for each equipment, runs into thousands. It is possible that the older management-inventory control economics theory of finding small batch manufacture uneconomic in fiscal terms, has given way to the realisation that an even older adage 'for want of a nail a kingdom....' is reestablishing itself. Dealing with the CIS in the last two years must have been traumatic.

—We are broke. Notice that the maintenance or even the capital budgets for 1993-94 are chicken feed, though the overall defence budget stands at an impressive Rs 19,180 crores. It buys nothing but a bit of time.

—The Cabinet Committee on Political Affairs (CCPA) sanctions any expenditure over Rs 20 crores which again is chicken feed, in the armaments field. Getting a sanction from the CCPA is as painful as tooth extraction. But to their advantage they have the whole consolidated fund of India to move funds and monies from hither to thither.

—The Defence Minister stated that the development project funds sanctioned for the ARJUN were Rs 280 crores, of which roughly Rs 240 crores have been expended in getting the two prototypes or definitive models on to demonstration. If the CCPA is not approached, the project would stall, as denial by delay may occur.

—If the tank is dedicated to the nation and firm orders (in this case 126) are placed—then monies will be available to look into a number of areas in which the ARJUN does not come up to scratch and/or is bereft of any advertised capability.

—The residual de-bugging would then be carried out as 'modifications'. The 126 tank orders plus spares and logistics back up is a Rs 1000 crore affair. This can, by no means, be called chicken feed.

—Further, the official figure of the foreign exchange component of the tank is 35 percent. A conservative non official estimate will put it at 60 percent.

—How do you read the picture?

CHART - 1

COMPARATIVE DATA - 'HEAVY' MBTS

Performance Comparison

In mobility and fire power, ARJUN measures up to advanced tanks in production today.

Comparison of leading features of ARJUN with other contemporary MBTs in the world

Name	Weight	Width	Height	Engine	Speed	Main Armt
	(te)	(m)	(m)	(hp)	(km/h)	(mm)
Abrams M1A1 (USA)	60	3.6	2.9	1500	70	120
Leopard 2 (Germany)	56	3.7	2.8	1500	72	120
LeClerc (France)	53	3.3	2.3	1500	68	120
Challenger (UK)	62	3.5	3.0	1200	60	120
Merkava (Israel)	60	2.7	2.75	908	58	105
Arjun (India)	56.5	3.5	2.3	1400	72	120

All charts and features are reproduced verbatim from media hand outs on the day of the dedication ceremony

CHART - 2

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY FEATURES IN THE ARJUN

Mobility

—Low ground pressure, high power-to-weight ratio

—Robust hydro-pneumatic transmission system

—Optimised running gear

Sighting System

—Gunner's Main Sight with day-night capability

—Panoramic sight for Commander

Fire Control

—Computer-controlled integrated fire control s'aved to Sighting System; integral laser range finder

—High first round hit probability in all modes

Armament and Ammunition

—Stabilised 120 mm rifled gun

—FSAPDS [expansion unknown]

—HESH [expansion unknown]

—AA gun (12.7 mm)

—Machine gun (7.62 mm)

Protection

—Low silhouette

—All round protection with 'Kanchan' armour

Crew Comfort

—High; ergonomic design

—Low fatigue in extended runs

User Trials

—Spread over 4 years; by MBT Team and User

—Varied terrain and climatic conditions

—Cumulative run of more than 2000 km

—User feedback used to refine design

Status

—Two pre-production tanks (ex-HVF) are under trials; nine more are getting ready (this means that the Army will pay for the latter). During the integrated trials the tank(s) have been put through a very tough trial regime of 2000 kms run and 1000 rounds of firing.

In an associated handout to the media some other advanced features have been given out separately. Once again these are given below so that the reader can get a comprehensive overview of the number of subsystems available on the tank.

Features of the ARJUN

The MBT currently features advanced technologies like:

—120 mm rifled gun

—FSAPDS ammunition with soft core

—semi-combustible cartridge case and high energy propellant

—integrated fire control system based on independent line of sight stabilisation

—accurate fire on the move capability through electro-hydraulic gun control system

—thermal imaging system for fighting both by night and day and under adverse weather conditions

—specialised 'Kanchan' armour in appropriate combination with monolithic armour for enhanced immunity

—high power-to-weight ratio power pack hydropneumatic suspension for superior ride comfort good vehicle handling characteristics with fire-on-the-move capability

—NBC [nuclear, biological, and chemical] protection

—Laser Warner

—improved radio communication.

OBSERVATIONS

The original General Staff Qualitative Requirement (GSQR) combat weight was given out as a not to exeed 52 tonnes. Chart 1 gives the weight as 56 tonnes. The general opinion is that the production tank will weigh 58 to 59 tonnes. Even 56 tonnes translates to military (weight) classification 60.

Theorising on the experience of the Indian Armoured Corps in two major mid-intensity conflicts, one has to grant that the best performances, both in offensive and defensive operations, was put in by the 20 pdr (84 mm) gun Centurion Mk7 regiments. Clearly, conservative tactical and operational planning—a hallmark of the Indian Army—indicates that a heavy well protected tank is suited to its genius. Effectively it desires continuous movement capability in a projectile swept tactical battle area—what has come to be known as "battlefield mobility"—with a high degree of potential survivability.

The ARJUN, given its Kanchan (composite) and 'monolithic' or homogenous armour mix, should provide good protection, in the frontal arc, against likely opposition in the West including the KHALED.

All main guns on tank inventories in the West are now capable of firing very high velocity APDS [expansion unknown] or long rod APFSDS [expansion unknown]. In a few years the ARJUN would potentially be competing for dominance of the tactical battle area against 125 mm very high verocity APFSDS fired by KHALED. In the TV coverage of the 28 February demonstration, all engagements were with HESH secondary ammunition. Where is the ARJUN APFSDS? Did the COAS witness APFSDS erlgagements on 1 February? If not, why not? If he did, what were the results?

One dislikes pontificating on professional matters where professionals dedicated to the project are present in large numbers. Even so, all would agree that in about the last three years, gun accuracy with APFSDS has come in for criticism. Unrehearsed firing on the ranges in reasonable tactical settings is an altogether different thing from firing against composite static arrays conducted by DRDO in proof ranges. The ARJUN has to prove itself against head on (frontal arc) attacks using APFSDS against composite armour at mean and maximum battle ranges. The choices are two: fire against a fully combat Loaded T-72 M1 at mean battle range or better still use one of the 12 'models' hitherto manufactured of the ARJUN itself.

Against kinetic energy attacks the turret has not been shaped well to provide ballistic protection. It is far too slab sided. The panniers as well as the turret composite armour should be able to fend off chemical energy ammunition hits. Front hull and glassis sloping seem

adequate. During the demonstration some targets were engaged, with the ARJUN on the move at or around 15 kmph with the turret swung left. The commander was sensible enough to utilize a slight depression so that the major number of his targets (presenting their frontal arcs—mainly) were clearly silhouetted. Once again the question—why did the ARJUN not fire APFSDS during the demonstration?

—No member of the distinguished gathering desired to jeep across or ride the ARJUN, to go and see for himself what effect the impact of the projectile had made on the hulks. Were scabs and spalling present within the targetted hulks?

—No night firing was demonstrated.

—There was remarkably little obscuration due to muzzle blast.

—The present (January-February) mean ambient temperature was around 25C max to 7C min at the ranges. There had been some rain.

Though the above observations have mixed protection and firepower aspects, this was found necessary due to historical reasons. The thickly armoured Centurion firing APDS out matched the 90 mm HVAP firing M-48 Patton on the subcontinental battlefield, though massive publicity was generated about the M-48's 'sophistication'.

We still remain with stages of mobility (and agility) of the ARJUN. The hand-out speaks of both being on the higher side. Two aspects may be settled at the outset. Agility aspects were not shown on TV or (it seems) at the demonstration, viz ditch crossing, vertical step, gradient percentage. Therefore one does not know; all this would have to be settled before the tank goes to Canada (as declared) for an Armoured fighting vehicle exhibition cum tank competition in 1994.

Mobility wise the high speed run on the tarmac in front of the gathering was certainly impressive, all 1400 horses pulling at an ambient temperature of around 25C. Mobility: Even at a nominal weight of 57 to 58 tonnes, a width over tracks of 3.5 m and an (impressively low) height of 2.3 m the ARJUN is a strategic mobility liability. So also for operational zone/sector movement on transporter or on tracks. The degree of difficulty differs theatrewise, zonewise even divisional sectorwise.

—Straightaway one must conclude that in a time sensitive mobilisation milieu the ARJUN should not be cantoned in central India. ARJUN units and formations have to be then 'well up' in peacetime. One should note that the subcontinental surface transport infrastructure suffers from two disabilities. Except for the National Highways which are at mil classification 70, all others are class 40. Second, the main strategic arena—Punjab, the Jammu-Pathankot corridor (etc) is canal infested with high water tables and crossings based on classification 40.

This aspect must have weighed in the minds of Gen Zia-ul-Haq and his staff when on that fateful day in August 1988 he witnessed the M-1 Abrams demonstration in the Bahawalpur field firing ranges, and thereafter perished in the now infamous aircrash. They must have mulled over the problem of filtering an M-1 formation up one of their many river 'corridors' with numberless lateral canals which comprise their prime real estate for defence. It should be remembered that:

—Both, in 1965 and 1971, the Centurion equipped formation(s) were emplaced in the operational zone much before hostilities commenced. Also the Centurions of 1 Armoured Division made heavy weather of cross country movement after a bit of rain in September 1965.

—In the canal infested Khemkaran sector, even light amphibian tanks, like the newly inducted PT-76, tended to bog down. Part of the blame was obviously placed on the drivers who had had no more than two weeks training.

All the above factors and experiences put together give a picture that:

—The ARJUN's peacetime cantoning must be close to or within the desired operational zone.

—Extremely detailed 'going maps' must be prepared for operability in 'Wet' zones within the tactical battle areas and thereafter rehearsed. A number of bridges and culverts will have to be reinforced.

—The above aspects will give clear indications where the ARJUN should be tasked defensively and where it should be tasked in the offensive mode. Any correlation with the recent Gulf War Desert Sabre phase must be avoided. An average of three months preparation time per armoured formation, including environmental tuning up, and a four day advance battle (of sorts), gives no worthwhile lessons in employment of heavy MBTs. Remember Gen Schwarzkopf stepping on the sands near Wadi-el-Batin and then declaring that he had the Iraqi Army by the throat? With that simple test he had guaged the 'going' in the Kuwaiti theatre of operations where he was apprehensive that his Heavy MBT fleet designed for the Central European Front would not be able to negotiate the desert environment of the prospective battlefield.

Mobility is clearly not a matter of horse power alone: alongwith the number of horses comes the power train, power to weight ratio, ground pressure et al. It is here that the ARJUN is being prematurely inducted. The 1992 summer trials showed up two inclement signs at ambient temperatures of 45C to 50C: first, that the optronics misbehaved within the turret, and second, the MTU-14 loses upto 20-25 percent of its horses at these temperatures. From the engine to final drive sprocket it is normal to lose 100 horses. But losing 250 horses due to high temperatures is not acceptable. The extra cooling pack (forming a rectangular protroberance on the engine

deck) fitted expressly for this purpose seems failure prone. This must be made robust so that in the tactical Battle Area (TBA) all horses are available when contact is imminent. One can accept the penalty in the operational (approach) zone, but not in the TBA where every horse is needed for high torgue, high acceleration movement. The price paid for the main gun not fully depressing over a narrow arc across the engine deck is worth paying.

On the mobility side, undue maintenance burden of the hydro pnuematic suspension system must not be passed on to combat units. The logistics of providing inert gas in under developed areas is unthinkable and in any case the whole Army suffers from a chronic lack of lubricants, greases, high pressure air cylinders etc.

One last point to ponder. The German company MTU—a giant in its field—no longer manufactures the MTU 14 engine (originally meant of for the Leopard 1). What is the guarantee that these engines will be forthcoming now or an indigenous source, say, Kirloskar Cummins India or Ashok Leyland will accept design transfer?

The Long Rod Penetrator

The design is contemporary, and it seems 1000 primary (and secondary HESH) rounds have already been fired. If so, would it not have been worth the while to engage one of the static hulks dotting the range (preferably a Centurion/T-72 head on) and thereafter take some of the interested gentlemen on an ARJUN to see the target effect? This is mentioned again without any embarrassment because it cannot be over-emphasised that no amount of gadgetry will be of any use to man, beast or country unless the APFSDS impacts to kill.

One understands that steel has been preferred alongwith a 'soft core'. Given long rod terminal ballistic phenomena as well as in—country metailurgical expertise, a bit of a chance is being taken. Manufacturing tolerance limits will be very fine indeed and the Heavy Alloy Penetrator Project will have their work cut out for them. Three aspects need to be ascertained in order to give the ARJUN crew the degree of confidence they deserve:

—The gun control system, the Laser Range Finder, optronics and ballistic computer generating an aiming mark, invariably and without fail, which would result in very high hit probability rates at mean fighting ranges (these vary operational zone wise).

—Targets on the move especially diagonal crossers must get the same probability. No enemy would be idiot enough to present a flank. Contrary to what the TV news reader said, no moving target was engaged on the dedication day. The ARJUN engaged a few targets (emplaced at ranges varying from 800 to 2100 m) on the move with turret left.

—The APFSDS technology is not easy to master. Internal, external and terminal ballistics must be just right. Internal ballistics is therefore critical. The rod should be losing velocity at or about 20 m/sec at 1 km. The round will be coming up against composite armour of the KHALED first (well- potentially). So no shot shatter nor broad side on impact is acceptable. Where is the APFSDS? /Miscellaneous/

If the design has been frozen, is it permissible to ask where or who is going about gathering the undermentioned.

—Laser Warner (Warning System). One is of the opinion that this should not be too difficult to devise.

—The difficult system to provide for is the Thermal imager for the integrated day and night sights. One remembers that a contract was given to the erstwhile Yugoslavia for the provision of thermal sights for the T-72M1. That of course went down the drain. Where has the ARJUN'S come from? The same holds true for the simplified fire control system, when the Vijayanta did not make use of a number of imported pieces for so long?

—It seems that the turret is still injesting fine dust. So where is the operational NBC system? This also has implications for fording capability. Presently it will be shallow.

—Finally the ARJUN would need to have a sensible communications system to be installed. One hears of a T-72 net radio? Plan AREN below divisional level depends on a wide variety of net radios viz HB, VC series etc. So what is the radio suit especially for 'command and control' tanks? The ARJUN will have to communicate with T-72, BMP-II, SP (AD) artillery, straight leg infantry, missile companies, assault engineers in a very crowded spectrum of prechannelling especially in the VHF range. Distribution of AREN era sets Army wide is also going to cost a packet. So what is the solution against a potential adversary well up on Electronics Warfare. To rub the matter home a Vijayanta formation was brought to a halt (and cried foul) when the opposition jammed its command nets comprehensively in Brass Tracks-IV for a lengthy period.

CONCLUSION

From the theoretical and conceptual point of view we are with the ARJUN. Observations have however been set down based on extensive previous coverage. Some observations that may generate controversy are given below:

—On the face of it, freezing of the design without troop trials in Punjab means a premature decision and a wildly optimistic time frame of induction. If our broad photo analysis bears any relationship to reality, then there are no comments.

—One feels that care must be exercised before allotting manufacture of major assemblies to public sector undertakings. Tanks ortracked vehicles have a mind of

their own which can be understood only by long employed technicians. So if the turret goes to BHEL and the hull and running gear to BEML, the Long gun to Kanpur Ordnance Factory, and a clutch of optronics to IRDE, who does the final assembly? Diversification, utilisation of idle capacity, bringing in the private sector are all very fine. But will the end product work, that is the basic question.

—Lastly one must admit that the ARJUN has progressed remarkably in the last year and a half, far much more than expected. Congratulations are in order! However, there should be no attempt to pass on defects or unacceptable maintenance liabilities to combat units. This is what is feared may happen.

—We disagree with the editorial of INDIAN EXPRESS dated 3 March '93, in which it has been said that a good market for the ARJUN is available in SouthEast Asia. There the terrain will not accept a 58-59 tonne Main Battle Tank. To date combat as well as non combat service, armourwise, has been performed by the 40 tonne class medium MBT whether in Vietnam, Cambodia or Thailand.

—Mr. Mallikarjuna, Minister of State for Defence, in reply to a member's question during the budget session of parliament, has stated that two regiments of the Arjun will be inducted into the Indian Army in the year 2002 AD. Apart from restating our premise that the induction of the Arjun in the year 1993, as stated by the erstwhile Defence Minister, Mr. Sharad Pawar, is premature, what else can one say.

Iran

Secret Serbian Oil Deal 'About To Be Concluded'

PM1905101493 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 16 May 93 p 2

[Report by Walid Abi-Murshi: "Market Sources Confirm, Tehran Denies Existence of Secret Iranian-Serbian Oil Deal"]

[Text] London—A well-informed oil source has confirmed to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that secret Iranian-Serbian negotiations concerning supplying the Belgrade government with Iranian crude oil for three years are about to be concluded. And that a contract for this deal, whose overall value totals $500 million, will be signed within the next few days. But Iranian Embassy sources have denied the existence of the deal, saying that it is not in line with Tehran's official policy.

According to the oil source's information, the negotiations have been conducted on the Iranian side by the "Iranian Oil Organization," an official government establishment, but the deal was "cooked up" at the highest levels between the Iranian and Serbian sides and was approved in Tehran by Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati and his deputy Va'ezi.

Under the deal Tehran undertakes to supply the Belgrade government with the oil it needs for three years and at a price $2 lower than the market price. Tehran set a condition for concluding the deal, namely that it should remain secret and the original source not be revealed so that it would not appear as a state helping Serbia to violate the new international move toward tightening the trade blockade imposed on it.

The information provided by the oil source in question adds that a Lebanese businessman based in the French capital, Paris, has been authorized to make arrangements to secure the transportation of oil to the Serbs via a "third state," since the Iranian-Serbian deal stipulates that the oil should be delivered to European ports outside the Serbian coast on the Adriatic, where it would be transported overland to Serbian territory.

The oil source's information says that the obstacle to the conclusion of the secret deal has been the Serbian leadership's need to secure a $500,000 loan to pay for the Iranian crude oil to be delivered over the next three years. The source adds that the Belgrade government has asked Arab figures who had strong relations with the former Yugoslav government to secure this loan. And it seems that these figures' endeavors will succeed soon.

Over the telephone, the official in charge of information at the Iranian Embassy in London denied the existence of such a deal with the Serbs. He reemphasized his country's position on helping Bosnian Muslims to confront the Serbian aggression against them. He said that any deal of that kind means helping the enemies of Muslims—which would contravene Tehran's official position and its policy on the Bosnian crisis.

Answering a question put by AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT he added that there is no possibility of the Iranian Oil Organization's concluding a trade deal with any foreign quarter without reference to the government, since it needs government approval for any contracts it concludes.

Meanwhile, a PLO official in Tunis has denounced the attempts to drag the PLO's name into this Iranian-Serbian deal, describing them as an abortive attempt to distort the PLO's reputation at a time when it is registering a courageous position by its return to the peace negotiations.

The Palestinian source did not rule out the involvement of Israeli quarters in promoting these reports.

Oil sources had said that PLO officials played the role of an intermediary to secure the loan required by the Belgrade government.

Rohani Confirms Government Holding 20,000 Iraqi POW's

NC2005104593 Paris AFP in English 1015 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Tehran, May 20 (AFP)—Iran confirmed Thursday [20 May] it was still holding 20,000 Iraqi

POWs but said their fate depended on Iraq's release of Iranian prisoners from their 1980-1988 war.

"We have proof that 5,000 Iranian POWs are in Iraq for which all necessary details were furnished to Baghdad, and it was determined they were all alive," said Hasan Rohani, the deputy speaker of parliament.

He told TEHRAN TIMES newspaper that Iraqi action would have a "favorable impact... on 20,000 Iraqi prisoners of war held in Iran."

It was the first official confirmation by Iran that it was still holding 20,000 Iraqi POWs five years after the conflict, a figure long claimed by neighbouring Iraq.

Baghdad has denied holding any Iranian prisoners, while the International Committee of the Red Cross has reported 1,000 Iranians in Iraqi jails.

Rohani said Tehran would normalize relations with Baghdad if it showed "goodwill toward Iran by finding a solution to the problem of its prisoners and ceasing terrorist activities inside Iran."

Government Releases 200

LD1905131993 Tehran IRNA in English 1229 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA—Iran in a humanitarian measure on Wednesday [19 May] released another group of 200 Iraqi Army personnel who had fled to Iran during the Persian Gulf war.

The batch were handed over to Iraqi officials at the Khosrawi border point, in the western province of Kermanshah.

Earlier this month 200 Iraqi army personnel, also from the Persian Gulf war, were repatriated to their home country.

The latest release brings the total number of the Iraqi prisoners of war released unilaterally by Iran and repatriated to Iraq during the last Iranian calendar year (ended March 20) to 3,455.

A spoksman for the commission in charge of the war prisoners affairs told IRNA today that contraray to the goodwill demonstrated by Iran, neither Baghdad nor international organizations have taken any measure to reciprocate the Iranian move.

He experessed hope that the latest move of the Islamic Republic of Iran would pave the way for release of the Iranian war prisoners, captured during the 1980-88 Iraq-Iran war, who are still kept in Iraq.

Rebels Reportedly Blow Up Oil Pipelines in South

NC2005103993 Paris AFP in English 0920 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Tehran, May 20 (AFP)—Rebel fighters have blown up several oil pipelines in southern Iran after infiltrating from Iraq, but they have been captured, a senior official said Thursday.

Hasan Rohani, deputy speaker of parliament, told TEHRAN TIMES newspaper that the commandos were members of the autonomy-seeking Arab National Front and the Iraq-based Mojahedin-e Khalq.

Without specifying when the blasts occurred or their location, he said the infiltrators were "Iraqi-trained and equipped groups with necessary materials to embark on terrorist activities in Iran."

"Recently these agents blasted oil pipelines in southern Iran," he told the English-language TIMES.

Western oil experts told AFP that several acts of sabotage took place last month near Ahvaz, in the oil-rich Arab province of Khuzestan bordering Iraq, causing "some damage" to pipelines.

Rohani said Iran could not improve ties with Iraq, with which it was at war between 1980 and 1988, unless Baghdad stopped "sending terrorists to Iran, both through the south and the Kurdistan north."

Tehran charged on April 21 that Iranian Kurdish rebels and the Mojahedin-e Khalq, the main armed opposition group, had "indulged in acts of terrorism in Iran's western border region."

The Mojahedin said last week it killed or wounded 200 Revolutionary Guards militiamen in a series of operations, reporting seven dead in its own ranks. Eight pipelines were destroyed in the Abadan region of Khuzestan, it said.

Interior Ministry Official on Afghan Refugees

LD1905162093 Tehran IRNA in English 1433 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Tehran, May 19, IRNA—Of the 2,042,000 Afghan nationals in Iran about 580,000 are living illegally without any valid papers, Interior Ministry Director-General for Expatriate and Refugee Affairs, Ahmad Hoseyni, announced here Wednesday. He spoke of a plan to gather nationwide information on Afghans living in Iran to deal with the problem of illegally employed refugees.

According to Hoseyni, 518,000 Afghan refugees have returned to their home country over the last calendar year (ended March 20). Some 1,680,000 of the total registered Afghans, are residing in towns and cities while about 160,000 of them are living in camps, he added. Hoseyni stressed that, according to the trilateral agreement signed by Iran, Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Kabul government is obliged to guarantee the security of Afghan nationals returning to their homeland and to ensure their rights.

Pointing to the current clashes in Kabul, he stated that the clashes have no serious impact on the upward return trend of refugees to Afghanistan. Hoseyni said that the number of Afghans returning from Iran to their homeland is quite high compared to Pakistan from where the return of refugees has virtually come to a halt.

At the trilateral meeting, Iran and Afghanistan stated that the the aid allocated to refugees by UNHCR was insufficient. The issue is under consideration, according to the Interior Ministry official.

About 70,000 Afghan refugees are expected to return to their homeland during 1993 according to the schedule.

Spokesman Cited on Cabinet Session, Afghanistan

NC2005065593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 20 May 93

[Excerpts] Plans for constructing, using, and expanding potable water installations and hygienic sewage systems in villages will be implemented with the cooperation of the Construction Jihad and the people. Dr. Hasan Habibi, first vice president and government spokesman, said this at the end of yesterday's cabinet session. [passage omitted]

Referring to the ambiguities that have arisen regarding implementation of the Elections Law, Habibi said that based on an amendment recently approved by the Majles, in areas where voting machines are not available, votes will be counted by hand and by virtue of the previous law on presidential elections. In some cases, Iranians abroad who do not have identity cards can vote with their valid Iranian passports. [passage omitted]

In conclusion, Habibi referred to the problems in Afghanistan and stated: The Iranian Government wants a peaceful solution to the conflict in Afghanistan. The first vice president emphasized Iran's concern over the Afghan situation and stated: The only outcome of the conflict is that the Muslims will weaken and foreigners will threaten to exploit this situation.

Commentary Views Velayati Tour, Gulf Cooperation

LD1905212093 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 19 May 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati, foreign minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran, following his visit to Spain, has opened his tour of the Persian Gulf region. On the first leg of his tour, Iran's foreign minister arrived in Saudi Arabia. During the visit, Dr. Velayati, apart from presenting a message from Iran's President, Hashemi-Rafsanjani, to King Fahd also conferred with the Saudi officials on bilateral relations and regional issues.

Iran's foreign minister will also visit Oman, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Bahrain, and Kuwait. The subject of Dr. Velayati's talks with the officials of the Persian Gulf states will revolve around efforts aimed at expanding bilateral and regional cooperation in political and economic spheres. Expansion of such cooperation will prepare grounds for the establishment of peace, stability, and security in the region. Such goal seeks to secure collective interests of the regional countries thus enabling each of the Persian Gulf littoral states to realize its own interests.

The Persian Gulf region, due to its sensitivity, has for many years been recognized as a tense region. Even though such tensions have often been caused the misunderstanding among the leaders of the regional states, external elements have been responsible more than those states in aggravating the tensions. Since any harm and negative impacts arising out of the regional tensions are mostly detrimental to the regional states themselves, there is need for efforts to be undertaken by these countries so as to rid themselves of such tensions and to reject the external elements disturbing regional ties.

For many decades this view that countries, in an individual capacity, are capable of obtaining their own security and interests, had checked the expansion of cooperation aimed at securing peace and stability. But today such a view cannot have any room. Close association of regional countries has inter-linked their security issues with each other in manner that any threat posed to one of them becomes a threat to the others as well. For this reason maintenance of security, peace and stability, is possible solely through cooperation.

In the Persian Gulf region, where countries are mostly reliant on oil and formulate their development policies on the basis of oil incomes, any unilateral act by them or any threat to the oil export from the region will be detrimental not only to just one of them but to all of them. Moreover the political tensions threatening any of the regional countries will have its immediate effects in other states.

Evidently, the regional states, through contacts and negotiations that may remove misunderstandings, can reach such identity [as heard] of views which will bolster cooperation. Also by considering the point that external elements, prior to caring for regional peace and stability, think of their own interests, it is necessary that the Persian Gulf littoral states observe their problems on a regional basis. Such an act will prove effective in the promotion of cooperation. Bolstering of such cooperation can eventually establish regional security and consequently the security of each of the regional states.

KAYHAN Claims Western Intelligence To Kill Rushdie

LD2005081093 Tehran IRNA in English 0745 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Tehran, May 20, IRNA—A Tehran newspaper [KAYHAN INTERNATIONAL] predicts that Salman

Rushdie, with a "dubious distinction bestowed upon him by the imam's thundering fatwa, the ammunition this provided to the West and the 2m dlrs [million dollars] bounty placed on his head by the 15th Khordad Foundation," is about to reach the end of his "long, circuitous route with destiny."

After four years in hiding and some 200 changes of address, relief may well be around the corner, says the paper, adding that "it will be very interesting to watch how Salman Rushdie dies."

The editorial in the paper's weekly international edition says: "The truth is that the Indian-born author has just about spent all his political capital. Following his May 11th meeting with British Prime Minister John Major, there is little use left for Rushdie in the West's manipulating him for their bigger designs against Islam, both in the Muslim world and the West itself. There might well be a White House meeting and coffee with President Bill Clinton and then Rushdie will be completely expendable.

"The only thing left in completing the circle being woven around the fatwa will be to kill the man. This, however, will not be the work of any Muslim hands, but of Western intelligence services. Rushdie is now like unto a goose being fattened for slaughter.

"The scenario will run something like this: after a possible tour of the rose garden, the newest 'friend of Bill' will return to Great Britain, basking in the support the American leader will have anointed him with. Other secret invitations to speak will be received in Europe. Here we caution the Italians, Swedes, Spanish and Germans to be on their toes because somewhere in Europe during his travels, the author of 'The Satanic Verses' is literally going to get it in the neck.

"To add to the contrived drama, it might happen during a press conference. It won't happen on British soil because the intelligence services there will not stand to be so sullied, that is why we caution the other European states mentioned above. The assailant will also most probably be extinguished on the spot and be sure that Iranian passports and identity cards will be all over him. Keep in mind here that when Iranian students captured the American Embassy in Tehran in 1979, they discovered nearly 1,000 Ghanaian passports. False documentation will be no problem for a sophisticated joint intelligence agency operation.

"The fact that Iran will have clean hands in this affair is useless because the death of Rushdie goes much further than the taking of his life. The idea is to turn up the decibel level of the anti-Iran, anti-Islam campaign that seems to be the lifeblood of American and British-led foreign policy regarding the Muslim world.

"There might even be a show of EC ambassadors packing their bags and leaving Tehran in the wake of this action. Most certainly punitive measures will be called for against Iran and protestations of genuine innocence from Tehran will simply have to take a back seat to what is already in the pipeline. Remember that it took 10 years for the U.N. to make the admission that Iraq invaded Iran, though that event too happened in full view of everyone. So when Rushdie dies in-camera, don't think for a moment that anybody in the Western controlled media will be interested in what Iran will have to say.

"The first live television 'hit' recorded was that of the hapless Lee Harvey Oswald, in a Dallas police station, following the shooting of President John Kennedy. The American authorities still have not admitted to their own nation that piece of nastiness, the up-ending of 'Camelot', was the work of Washington's most powerful institutions. Thus when Rushdie gets his, all the standards regarding the public's right to know will be grievously violated and Tehran will be left holding the bag.

"What is ironic about the whole thing is that the author spent so much time and energy flaying Third World governments about their repressive ways, corruption etc. This is best typified in his previous best-seller 'Midnight's Children', wherein he lambasted Indira Gandhi's administration and indigenous Indian culture in general. Now his erstwhile protectors have him like a blindfolded rat in a maze. When he gets to the last leg of the labyrinth and he is almost there, bang—Rushdie will make literary history as perhaps the most willing stooge of Western imperialism the 20th century will ever know."

* Tashkent Closes Display of Religious Books

93LA0046E London KEYHAN in Persian 29 Apr 93 p 2

[Text] The "Iran Cultural Week" exhibition, which was to have opened on 23 Farvardin [12 Apr] in Tashkent, the capital of the Republic of Uzbekistan, opened two days late. The reason for the delay was that officials in Uzbekistan did not agree to the opening of the Islamic Republic's book booth. According to the newspaper JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI, the book booth was to have displayed the Koran and religious books.

After the Iranian delegation came to Tashkent, the Foreign Ministry of Uzbekistan announced that the exhibition could not open and that it would not agree to its opening unless the book booth was removed.

Quoting a member of the Iranian delegation, the newspaper JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI also writes that Uzbekistan's security agents inspected all the items, images, and artistic and cultural works that they had brought for display "in an unwelcoming and insulting way."

The exhibition in Tashkent was held at the request of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic in Uzbekistan and with the agreement of this republic's Ministry of Culture. Despite all this, none of Uzbekistan's high-ranking officials attended the exhibition, despite being invited.

Their excuse was that at the time of the Islamic Republic's exhibition their attendance was prevented by the need to attend another exhibition on Uzbekistan's domestic commerce.

Tehran accuses Uzbekistan of having done this to please "the Ottoman Turks." 'Ali Larijani, the minister of culture and Islamic guidance, who was to have gone to Tashkent for the opening of the exhibition, cancelled his trip because of this development.

'Crafty' Film

Concerning this development, the newspaper JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI writes that in the month of Azar 1371 [22 Nov-21 Dec 1992] when Eslam Karimov (or "Karimzadeh," according to this newspaper) came to Tehran, Tashkent television used a "crafty" film in its effort to portray the face of the Islamic Republic as "ugly." The newspaper JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI referred to "dry bread on a hand cart, blocked sewage, and an itinerant vendor" as examples of these "ugly" scenes, and it also cited "several women in chadors" in one of Tehran's alleys. The newspaper JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI regards anxiety about the spread of Islam in Uzbekistan on the part of those who "still miss communism" as something that must be understood, and it adds that the political thinkers, not only in Uzbekistan but in all the Asian republics, must realize that the existing realities cannot be kept out of public view forever, and that cultural and political advancement cannot be restrained forever in a world that is seeking relationships. Otherwise, they would not have overthrown the Soviet superpower and it would not have been faced with such a situation.

* Turkey Gets 3 Million Tons of Oil in Repayment

93LA0046G London KEYHAN in Persian 29 Apr 93 p 2

[Text] The Turkish Ministry of Finance announced that this year it has taken delivery of 3 million tons of crude oil from Iran.

An official of the Turkish Treasury Office said: Of the oil imported from Iran, 750,000 tons will be used to liquidate 80 million [as published] of the Islamic Republic's indebtedness to the Central Bank of Turkey. This agreement was made between the two governments in the month of March, but it was officially announced this week.

Last year Turkey purchased 2.46 million tons of oil from Iran.

This amount is 13 percent of Turkey's total oil imports. Saudi Arabia, with exports of 10.8 million tons, worth about $2.6 billion, was the largest exporter of oil to Turkey in the year 1992. This year Turkey plans to buy 19.95 tons [as published] of oil from other countries.

Government Decision To Export Medicines Criticized

NC1905130493 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 8 May 93 p 2

[Unattributed commentary: "The Export of Medicine to the Central Asian Republics"]

[Text] It was stated in the news today that Iran is trying to sell its medical and health products to Central Asian republics with the cooperation of UNIDO [UN Industrial Organization] and the WHO [World Health Organization].

This effort by our country's executive officials is taking place at a time when our own people are facing a severe shortage of medical and health products.

Also, we hear daily in various parts of the country that the people are suffering from the nonexistence or extremely high prices of vital medicines especially in the deprived and remote areas of our country.

Meanwhile, Health Minister Dr. Malekzadeh said in an interview with a Tehran morning daily today that the country's medicinal industries are completely dependent on foreign exchange, and added: Even though some of the medicines are manufactured domestically, nevertheless the raw material needed for these products is imported and we also import some medicines from abroad.

Dr. Malekzadeh also said that the only way to solve the shortage of medicines is to subsidize them for needy people and to readjust the price of medicines.

In view of the remarks by this high-ranking executive official of the country, we leave it up to our dear people to judge whether it is in our interest to export medical and health products in view of the conditions that we are facing at home?!

* Armed Forces Begin 10-Day Naval Maneuvers

93LA0046F London KEYHAN in Persian 29 Apr 93 p 2

[Text] A large maneuver of Iran's armed forces, which is to last 10 days, began Monday this week in the vicinity of the Persian Gulf. The submarine purchased from Russia will also participate in these maneuvers, called "Triumph Four."

IRNA reported that the purpose of these maneuvers is to test the defense preparedness of Iran's armed forces.

Although it is said that the waters of the Persian Gulf are not deep enough for a submarine to operate, recently America and Britain have sent several submarines to the mouth of the Persian Gulf to monitor conditions in the region.

Revolutionary Guard Admiral 'Ali Shamkhani said at the time of the purchase of the submarine from Russia that these vessels can operate in any kind of sea.

*** Lack of Control Over Foreign Currency Detailed**

93LA0046B London KEYHAN in Persian 29 Apr 93 p 1

[Text] Although the nation's economic, financial, and monetary officials have announced that with its continuous presence in the foreign exchange market the government, as the organizing factor, will prevent the foreign exchange rate on the free market from differing that much from the floating rate announced by the Central Bank, it appears from reports on the situation in the foreign exchange market that the presence of the government is not felt that much and that there is a 15- to 20-toman difference between price of a dollar on the free market and the floating rate that the Central Bank announced.

Central Bank officials also announced that there will be no restrictions on the transfer of foreign exchange except concerning the transfer of wealth, and that the nation's authorized banks are required to sell foreign exchange to applicants to the extent of their need. However this policy, which was to have been implemented as of the first of the year 1372 [21 Mar 1993], has not been implemented. On the contrary, the Central Bank has issued guidelines to the nation's banking network instructing them to act according to last year's regulations until further notice.

In its Saturday 22 Farvardin [11 Apr] issue, the newspaper RESALAT wrote that despite telephone and face-to-face contacts by its economic correspondent with the Central Bank, "officials of this bank ('Adeli, chief of the bank and Kashan, deputy chief for foreign exchange) refused to give any kind of explanation."

The Central Bank is also refusing to open letters of credit. A merchant says that in some cases when importers get the foreign exchange they need from the free market and make it available to the Central Bank, the Central Bank refuses to open credit accounts.

Foreign experts consider the lack of confidence in the Central Bank's policies to be one of the reasons for the instability of Iran's foreign exchange market. An official in the Ministry of Economic and Financial Affairs says that the Central Bank's success in effectively controlling the foreign exchange market depends on three things:

(1) a continued supply of foreign exchange in such a way that the market will not be short and demand will not exceed supply

(2) for this purpose, the Central Bank must have a sufficient reserve of foreign exchange in order to be able to inject foreign exchange into the market whenever necessary

(3) there should not be a great difference between the Central Bank's rate and the free market rate.

Despite all this, the foreign exchange market, which heated up in the second half of the month of Farvardin [5-20 Apr] is reported as being calmer these days, and for this reason the price of the dollar on the free market is about 170 tomans per dollar.

*** Law Enforcement Forces Taken Hostage**

93LA0046D London KEYHAN in Persian 29 Apr 93 p 1

[Text] Fifty members of the Iranian police forces are still being held by people the Islamic Republic calls "armed smugglers." This is the first time that the Tehran government has officially acknowledged the imprisonment of members of its armed forces. Colonel Mohammad Salehi, chief of the Islamic Republic's antinarcotics circle, who announced the above, said that in clashes with insurgents over the past few months 32 members of the police forces were also killed.

He gave this talk at the first meeting of the Antinarcotics Experts Group of the Eighth Committee of the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO). This meeting, which took place last week in Tehran, was attended by founding members Iran, Pakistan, and Turkey as well as the newly independent Central Asian nations.

*** Ministry of Justice Undergoing Changes at Top**

93LA0046I London KEYHAN in Persian 29 Apr 93 p 2

[Text] The changes that have taken place recently at high levels in the Islamic Republic's Ministry of Justice are politically important in that Mohammad Yazdi, chief of the judiciary, is trying to improve the regime's international image. An informed source told KEYHAN of London: Appointing a noncleric, Mohammad Naseri-Salehabadi, as Tehran's public prosecutor in place of Hojjat ol-Eslam Yunesi, who is considered a "hard liner," is considered an act of "heresy" in the Islamic Republic, because so far the high-ranking officials have been only in the employ of the clergy.

In these changes, Yunesi, the Tehran general prosecutor, Razini, chief of the Armed Forces Judicial Organization and Sadiqi, chief of the Tehran Province Department of Justice, were removed and assigned to positions that are considered "nonsensitive."

In Tehran, the newspapers JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI and KEYHAN harshly criticized these changes in the Ministry of Justice, while Moqtada'i, chief of the National Supreme Court, called these changes "normal." Musavi-Tabrizi, the general prosecutor of the Islamic Republic, also said that these new changes in the Ministry of Justice were done in accordance with "divine vice-regency and the interest of the government." He then discussed Yunesi, Tehran's former public prosecutor, whose name became familiar during the campaign against the so-called "limited partnership" companies. He said: "I kiss the hand of any official who wants to serve, and we will not be in the service of anyone who does not want to serve." Then, without naming any newspaper, he added: "The changes in the judiciary are not something for some people to exaggerate and enlarge."

Importance of the Officials

The chief of the office of justice in each province is the highest judiciary official in the province. He serves as the administrative chief of the public prosecutor's office and the judiciary. For this reason, the chief of the Tehran Office of Justice, who studies most of the important cases there, has special importance.

The Tehran public prosecutor, with the help of several other judges serving as assistant public prosecutors in the capacity of his deputies, investigates and completes cases and ultimately rules on the guilt of defendants. The Tehran judicial district has 14 precincts, all of whose chiefs work under the authority of the Tehran public prosecutor. After the national public prosecutor, the Tehran public prosecutor is the most important prosecuting judicial official.

The judicial police prosecutor investigates crimes pertaining to judges, and because judges have occupational immunity, he must first strip them of their competence and then investigate the charges against them. The investigation of charges against judges throughout the country is done by the judicial police prosecutor in Tehran.

It is worth saying that the chief of the Armed Forces Judicial Organization has not yet been designated.

* Tehran's Mayor Said Worried About Elections

93LA0046K London KEYHAN in Persian 29 Apr 93 p 12

[Text] With the enactment of the Council Law in the Majles and its approval by the Guardian Council, the final obstacles to the election of mayors should have been removed. It is expected that in large cities such as Tabriz, Mashhad, Esfahan, Shiraz and others, there will be an intense struggle between mayoral candidates, but the struggle that puts all the others in the shade will very likely be in Tehran, because the mayor of Tehran, Karbaschi, has sharp differences with the leaders of the Islamic regime and there are many discontented members of the public.

The mayor, however, since he must get the vote of the people, has thought of ways to eliminate the dissatisfaction, including the publication of the newspaper HAMSHAHRI. This newspaper, by publishing articles critical of the ruling regime and also by having a "nonoppressed" appearance, seeks to attract the support of those who want to hear a few correct and well-considered words in return for the money they pay.

PKK's 'New Assessment,' Cease-Fire Call Welcomed

NC1405180893 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 13 May 93

[Article from what is described as the latest issue of KORDESTAN, the voice of the Central Committee of the Democratic Party of Kordestan, DPK; date not given: "Positive Development in PKK Policy"]

[Excerpts] Abdullah Ocalan declared a unilateral cease-fire, calling on the masses in Turkish Kurdistan to observe Nowruz celebrations calmly and without violence. [passage omitted]

Some news circles doubted the PKK's [Kurdish Workers Party] new stance, but all agreed that if Ocalan was persistent and steadfast in implementing this policy, it would help the establishment of peace in Turkey.

The Turkish Kurds received the PKK's peace call positively and Nowruz was celebrated throughout Turkish Kurdistan without incident. At the time of writing, the cease-fire has not been violated and the PKK has attacked no government force. [passage omitted]

The Democratic Party of Kordestan of Iran has always believed the Kurdish problem cannot be solved through military means in Iran or elsewhere in Kurdistan. It has always regarded armed struggle as a form of struggle that despotic dictatorships have imposed on people's liberation movements. So, although the DPK has tried, in all conditions, to avoid differences with the PKK, it has always believed that if the Kurdish people's wants could be propounded peacefully in Turkey, it would be better for the forces inside the Kurdish movement in Turkey to choose this type of struggle. Our party has not agreed with some PKK methods and has never used these in 14 years of armed struggle.

We are now happy with the PKK's new assessment of the just struggle of the Kurdish people in Turkey, which has created a positive change in its political stances. We hope the PKK will continue this peaceful process and the Turkish Government will responsibly and realistically respond to this stance. We believe that despite all the obstacles and problems, a logical solution to the Kurdish problem may exist in Turkey, which could become a suitable model for a Kurdish solution in other countries.

Ocalan's peace-seeking call has placed Turkish statesmen and its European and U.S. allies in front of a historic test. Pro-Turkish foreign circles and organizations—at least during the past couple of years—have regarded the PKK's extremist stance as an obstacle to a Kurdish solution in Turkey and they have repeatedly implied this point of view. If they are truly thinking of solving this old problem, they should give a positive answer to the PKK's new stance. They should not lose this opportunity and allow violence to resurface in Turkey.

Ocalan's call and the positive response by the masses in Turkish Kurdistan have shown that, first, the PKK has a noteworthy influence on the people of Kurdistan and, second, that this party's ranks enjoy strong discipline. So, the PKK can play a major and effective role in establishing peace in Kurdistan.

It is pleasing that in tandem with his peace call, Ocalan has opened a new chapter in his party's relations with other organizations of the Kurdish movement in Turkey. If, until some time ago, the PKK rejected all these organizations and parties and even considered them as traitors, it has now adopted a process of rapprochement and cooperation with them and considers every one of them as part of the Kurdish movement in Turkey. Ocalan's meeting with Kemal Burkay, first secretary of the Kurdistan Socialist Party of Turkey, and the joint statement issued by the two is a clear example of this PKK policy.

If the Turkish statesmen truly believe in the existence of the Kurdish people and their just rights and if they do not view the PKK as a terrorist and warmongering party, but as a political, logical, and peace-seeking party, they can and should take effective steps to recognize the national rights of the Kurdish people in Turkey. And if Turkey's Western allies are interested in supporting freedom, democracy, and human rights, they should use their influence to achieve this humanitarian objective.

We hope that all the sides will display realism and that our region will witness profound and significant changes soon.

Regime 'Counterrevolutionary' Group Noted

NC1705062893 (Clandestine) Voice of Mojahed in Persian 0300 GMT 17 May 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Text] The increase in the number of revolutionary youths who are turning to the headquarters of Iran's National Liberation Army [NLA] has terrified the remnants of Khomeyni's regime, who have once again used SAVAK [Security and Intelligence Organization] to hatch yet another filthy plot to trap supporters of the mojahedin and youths who are eager to join the NLA.

Reports indicate that Khomeyni's SAVAK recently started a group called the White Kerchiefed [Rusari Sefidan] in Tehran. Members of this group demonstrate in favor of the mojahedin, but this actually is a trap they have set to hunt down supporters of [words indistinct] and to prevent them from joining the ranks of the liberation struggle.

This group is formed primarily of girls who wear white or light- colored kerchiefs and garbs. The nucleus of the group is formed of certain traitors who were arrested in 1360-1361 [1981-1982], but who treacherously started to collaborate with the enemy in prison because of their weakness. One of these traitors is Parvin Partovi, who (?repeatedly appeared) on the regime's television in 1361, 1363, and 1367 [1982, 1984, and 1988] [words indistinct] of Khomeyni's SAVAK and resorted to a mudslinging campaign against the mojahedin.

The SAVAK-created group portrays itself to supporters of the Mojahedin-e Khalq Organization [MKO] as anti-regime and pro- mojahedin in a bid to attract them. As part of this attempt, the group organizes activities such as mountaineering. It sometimes even shows a videotape of the large NLA march at its meetings so that it can thus gain the [MKO] supporters' confidence. Khomeyni's SAVAK tries to use the group, which it has formed to infiltrate the network of pro-mojahedin groups, to [words indistinct] the [word indistinct] prisoners who want to establish contact with the MKO and to (?thwart the efforts of) youths who intend to join the NLA and to prevent them from going to NLA Headquarters by (?misleading) them.

Another objective Khomeyni's SAVAK is trying to accomplish through the White Kerchiefed is to encourage the supporters of the mojahedin to marry. Thus, marriage is used as a means to counter support for the MKO [words indistinct] so that married couples will find a diversion and thus lose their revolutionary determination to join the NLA. Encouraging the pro-mojahedin youths to marry and preventing them from joining the NLA are specific parts of a counterrevolutionary process that originates from Khomeyni's SAVAK. [largely indistinct passage on similar efforts in 1986 and 1987]

We call on [words indistinct] resistance forces to be alert in face of the SAVAK-formed group and similar efforts. The most important activity exposing such efforts is practical opposition by resistance members through the dispatch of pro-mojahedin forces to NLA Headquarters. Various counterrevolutionary methods are used to prevent the pro-mojahedin groups from going to NLA Headquarters. Naturally, the next step by Khomeyni's SAVAK will be to arrest active pro-mojahedin members and send them to torture chambers and the gallows. Therefore, [words indistinct]:

1. All the pro-mojahedin groups and those eager to join the NLA should expose this plot hatched by the enemy's treacherous SAVAK.

2. Those who are now trapped by the White Kerchiefed should seize the first opportunity to sever their contacts with them, thus completely freeing themselves from this group, and to strive to leave the country as soon as possible and join the NLA.

Death to Khomeyni's anti-human regime; greetings to [Mas'ud] Rajavi; long live the NLA.

Shelling of Iraqi Kurdistan 17-18 May Reported

NC2005073093 (Clandestine) Voice of Iranian Kordestan in Persian 1730 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Although the entire world, including everyone in Kurdistan, has condemned the plots being hatched by the antipopular and warmongering Iranian regime

against the Iraqi Kurds during the past couple of months, the regime continues to hatch these plots against Iraqi Kurdistan.

According to a report, the antipopular clerical regime's artillery units twice shelled border villages and farmland belonging to the defenseless people of Iraqi Kurdistan. The first attack was between 2130 and 2230 [1700 and 1800 GMT] on 17 May. The shelling resumed after an interval and continued until 0600 on 18 May. The shelling was so intense that the villagers were forced to leave their homes and seek refuge in safe havens. Although we have not yet received any reports on casualties, the recent shelling by the regime's antipopular forces has inflicted extensive material damage to the villages.

While once again condemning this inhuman act by the Kurd-killing clerical regime, we call on all political groups, humanitarian organizations, and human rights supporters to prevent the clerical regime from turning Iraqi Kurdistan into the arena of its plots and continuing its aggression. As long as no decisive stance is adopted against this regime, its reactionary elements will not cease their actions.

The clerical regime has decided to interfere in the domestic affairs of Iraqi Kurdistan in every possible way. Therefore, to prevent the antipopular and reactionary clerical regime from interfering in Iraqi Kurdistan, it must be further pressured and issued a serious warning.

*Forces Reportedly Occupy Part of Iraqi Kurdistan

93LA0046C London KEYHAN in Persian 29 Apr 93 p 1

[Text] According to a press statement published outside the country by the Democratic Party of Kordestan, on 4 Ordibehesht 1372 (24 Apr 1993) the armed forces of the Islamic Republic crossed the border in the vicinity of Panjvin and penetrated 5 km into Iraq with heavy artillery.

There was also shelling in Iraqi Kurdistan in the border area of Baneh, Qel'eh Dizheh and Fardasht. The Kurdish Democratic Party says the Islamic Republic warned the residents of several border villages to evacuate their villages, otherwise their villages would be fired upon. The published statement does not say how this warning reached the residents of those villages.

After the bombing of the headquarters of the Kurdish Democratic Party of Iran in Iraq by six Iranian military aircraft on 22 Esfand 1371 [12 Feb 1993], international newspapers and agencies reported that Iran's armed forces began shelling the Kurdish Democratic Party's positions with artillery along the Iran-Iraq border on 30 Farvardin 1372 (19 Apr 1993). While confirming these reports, the government of the Islamic Republic announced that its purpose was to "prevent penetration by foreign elements from the other side of the border into Iranian soil."

On the other hand, the nationalist republicans, the Feda'ian-e Khalq Organization (majority faction) and the Democratic Party of the People of Iran issued a joint statement published in Europe saying that these attacks "if continued, will cause more destruction and death."

This joint statement calls upon the United Nations "and all human rights organizations" to stop these attacks "before it is too late." According to this joint statement, "there is no military solution to the problems in Kordestan," and that along with the declaration of a ceasefire, "political and peaceful solutions must be sought to establish peace and tranquility in the Kordestan area."

Pakistan

Egyptian Terrorist Leaders in Afghanistan

NC1805141593 Cairo ROSE AL-YUSUF in Arabic 17 May 93 p 17

[Text] Security sources told ROSE AL-YUSUF that the fourth Egyptian security delegation now visiting Pakistan has verified that all the Egyptian terrorist leaders operating in Peshawar have left Pakistani territory and entered Afghanistan in order to escape from the pursuit of the Pakistani authorities.

The delegation traveled to Pakistan to negotiate the extradition of seven of these leaders.

Premier, World Bank Official Discuss Economy

BK1905150693 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] The prime minister, Mir Balkh Sher Mazari, has said that economic problems faced by the country are being addressed on priority basis and the market-friendly policies on which there is now a national consensus will continue without the negative features of the past. He was talking to the director of South Asia region of the World Bank, Mr. Paul Weisenman, who called on him in Islamabad today.

The prime minister apprised Mr. Weisenman of the policy action being taken by his government to address the immediate economic problems. The prime minister expressed the hope that support of international community and the confidence of investors will continue, especially when complete transparency is maintained in privatization and all investors are treated on equal basis. He said that there is no room for cronyism or deviation from stated policies and laid down rules in the new political dispensation.

During the meeting, difficult budgetary situation also came under discussion. The prime minister outlined measures to retrieve the situation. The prime minister

underlined the need to strengthen the balance of payment in order to achieve the objectives of the policies of trade and exchange liberalization.

The World Bank director was also briefed on measures taken by the government to control narcotics.

Spokesman Rejects 'Baseless' Indian Allegations

BK2005031893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 20 May 93

[Text] Pakistan has expressed surprise and regret over the baseless statement made by Indian Home Minister S.B. Chavan on Tuesday in New Delhi about the bomb blasts in Bombay. A Foreign Office spokesman referred to the bilateral meeting of the prime ministers of the two countries in Dhaka recently, in which Pakistan had reiterated its offer to cooperate fully in the investigations and in tracking down the suspects of the Bombay bomb explosions and had invited another Indian team to visit Pakistan in this connection. The Indian prime minister had then responded that he would inform Pakistan in a couple of days whether any Indian team would visit Pakistan or whether a Pakistani team would be going to India. Since no message had been received from India, it was therefore decided to send a dossier to New Delhi on the investigations conducted by Pakistan in this connection. The spokesman said even though India had provided Pakistan with incomplete information six days after the incidents, Islamabad had extended full cooperation in the comprehensive and thorough investigations. Pakistan had not received any official document from the government of India on the expulsion of any person from that country and, hence, the allegation that the suspects sneaked away from the Karachi airport and that they were later seen in different cities of Pakistan is totally false and incorrect. The spokesman referred to earlier statements of the Indian ministers in which they had categorically stated that no proof of Pakistan's involvement in the Bombay bomb blasts had been found. The spokesman asserted that the Indian ministers' contradictory statements are nothing but sheer propaganda aimed at leveling baseless allegations about terrorism against Pakistan.

Paper Criticizes Indian Fixation With Pakistan Bogey

BK1905111793 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 19 May 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Re-Run of the Memon Brothers Mystery Play for Mr. Malott"]

[Text] All of a sudden the mandarins in the government of India secretariat have started making disjointed noises about the so- called Memon brothers tale. It now very much sounds like Shakespeare's famous tale "told by an idiot, signifying nothing". It took the Indian police wizards several days to put together this story and another few days to make the discovery of all discoveries—the evidence that Pakistan had a hand in the Bombay blasts. They got the clue, so they say, that the said Memon brothers then safely flew out to Dubayy. Nobody in Bombay knew about this. Not until more than ten days after the mysterious brothers' exit from Bombay. Then, the eternally vigilant Bombay police, and presumably also other more sophisticated secret services, took their own time in picking up the telephone to have a word with the police chief in Dubayy. Quite naturally, the Dubayy police boss was not at all amused and said so. He gave a mouthful to the Bombay policewalas at a press conference. This should have embarassed the bosses in Bombay, but they seem to be impervious to such irelevance when they have a plot to work out. For their purpose it is more than enough to see a surreptitious Pakistani hand and then go on pegging away at the allegation. In this case politicians started yelling about Pakistan a long time before any investigating agency. It would not be a very far-fetched idea to say that the police, unable to come up with anything brighter, decided there was no harm in harping on the politicians' litany. When at long last the authorities in New Delhi designed to talk to Islamabad about the Memon brothers, the Prime Minister of Pakistan promised all help. And these is no reason to suspect that it was not offered. It should be noted, however, that to expect anyone to produce a miracle of recovery twenty days after the horses had bolted away is asking for the impossible. Now even if you look [words indistinct] help a great deal, would it? But the Government of Pakistan remained as good as its word. In order to carry the cooperation to the next stage, Pakistan Government invited high officials related to the Memon brothers mystery to come to Islamabad and have a detailed exchange of ideas and information. Predictably, the Indians haven't been able to see their way to return a civil response. Well, let them suit themselves. What else can Pakistan do?

Now, the curtain has risen on a new scene in New Delhi. A group of high officials from India's Home and Foreign Ministries put on a stage show in New Delhi on Monday, hurled all those old allegations against Pakistan all over again. It was a grotesque sort of chorus, unlikely to amuse many in Pakistan, or India for that matter. After all, haven't the Indian media already been over-fed upon this kind of scale stuff? There is nothing at all which is new or very significant in this banal re-run of a play which is at best pretty inane fiction. But one thing is significant [words indistinct] drama believe it is. The timing. This performance is in aid of Mr. John Malott, Assistant Secretary of State from Washington who has landed in New Delhi after a round of talks in Islamabad. The Indian government is bending over backwards to get Pakistan labelled as a terror exporter. So, the Home Secretary, the Cabinet Secretary [and] the Foreign Secretary jumped to the stage and started the student, anti-Pakistan chorus. As diplomacy, this is obviously not a model of maturity. The United States spokesmen have been at pains to point out that the government in Washington takes decisions on evidence collected by its own sources. It doesn't pick up bits and pieces and

potsherds form here there and anywhere. So, no matter how many million times the performers in New Delhi repeat their allegations it would make little difference. If hurling curses is good for the health of the top bureaucratic brass in New Delhi, who are we to grudge then enjoying their own concoctions?

It all boils down to something with which we are not unfamiliar. The authorities in New Delhi have a style all their own. They talk a great deal, though usually to not a great deal of tangible purpose. Their Pakistan-baiting is in fact the best substitute they could invent for a sane policy towards Pakistan and the problems confronting the subcontinent if there is any purpose the perpetual propaganda assault on Pakistan serves, it is to divert the attention of the people from their appalling poverty and privation [Words indistinct] tally incapable of realising is that their single- minded preoccupation with Pakistan-baiting is the real food the Hindu fanatics are thriving on and driving the sane elements to the wall. The major reason why the BJP [Bharatiya Janata Party], RSS [Rashtriya Swaymsevak Sangh] and Shiv Sena have virtually got into the driving seat and the Congress is finding itself pushed out of the race is the successive governments myopic insistence on painting Pakistan as the devil responsible for all the problems that have made life unbearable for the teeming millions of India. This disastrous fixation in India's psyche has ruined this subcontinent and goodness alone knows when the Indians would be able to break out of this mental blackout.

Indian Agent Killed in Occupied Kashmir

BK2005094793 Islamabad THE NATION in English 20 May 93 p 5

[Text] Nikyal (KPI)—It has been reported from Occupied Kashmir that mujahideen have killed a popular RAW [Research and Analysis Wing] agent, Mushtaq Humdani. He joined Al-Mujahid force of Azad Kashmir Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum in the guise of a mujahid and reached in held Kashmir and helped in arrest of several mujahideen at the hands of Indian Army.

PPP To Quit Government if Assemblies Not Dissolved

BK2005103193 Islamabad THE NATION in English 20 May 93 pp 1, 4

[Text] Lahore—PPP [Pakistan People's Party] leadership has decided in principle to quit the Caretaker set-up before the announcement of the election schedule if the Provincial Assemblies are not dissolved.

The decision was taken in a meeting of the Caretaker Federal Cabinet members with PPP Co-Chairperson Benazir Bhutto at Senator Gulzar's residence here on Wednesday, it was learnt.

Ms Bhutto told the Cabinet member that in the four provinces special cells have been set-up to rig the polls [words indistinct]. Caretaker Federal Finance Minister Farooq Leghari asked for some time to convey the decision to President Ghulam Ishaq Khan so as to allow him enough time for a review in this respect.

Ms Bhutto informed the PDA [People's Democratic Alliance] members that it was decided in the agreement with allies in the Caretaker set-up that in case the Prime Minister was from the PML [Pakistan Muslim League] (Chattha Group), the Caretaker government in Punjab and Sindh would be of PDA. It was also agreed upon that in the Federal and provincial Caretaker set-ups the PML (Chattha) and PDA would be given 40 percent share, each in the Cabinets while the rest 20 percent would go to other parties.

Election Commission Meets on Poll Arrangements

BK1905151893 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] The Election Commission of Pakistan, which met in Islamabad today, reviewed arrangements for conducting of general elections to the National Assembly on 14 July.

The meeting held under the chairmanship of the chief election commissioner, retired Justice Naimuddin, discussed at length the present position of electoral rolls, polling scheme, procurement of election material, ballot boxes, printing of forms, and other allied matters. The commission decided to announce the schedule for the general elections on the 29th of this month. As per amendment made in the form of ballot papers recently, the number of national identity card of each voter will be recorded on the counterfoil of ballot paper to minimize the chances of malpractices.

The commission also decided to make recommendations to the government regarding fixation of ceiling of election expenses. In order to make anti-defection clause of the political parties act 1962 more comprehensive, the commission recommended that the government may consider the advisability of enactment of law on the lines of the political parties amendment ordinance 1991 which has since lapsed.

The newly-appointed members of the Election Commission, Mr. Justice Zia Mahmud Mirza, judge of Lahore High Court, and Mr. Justice Mohammad Bashir Jehangiri, judge of Peshawar High Court, attended the meeting.

Sharif Claims Support of 130 National Assembly Members

BK1905155093 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, leader of his faction of the Pakistan Muslim league, has claimed that he enjoys the support of more than 130 members of the defunct

National Assembly. Talking to the members of the defunct National Assembly of his party and allied groups in Islamabad today, he also claimed that various former members of the National Assembly belonging to other parties, including those from the People's Democratic Alliance and the caretaker government, have also assured him of their support.

New Head of Military Intelligence Appointed

BK2005074993 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 20 May 93 p 12

[Text] Lahore—The GHQ [General Headquarters] has decided to appoint Major General Iftikhar Hassan Shah as the new director general of Military Intelligence (MI) in place of Major General Mushthaq Malik, who has been appointed GOC [General Officer Commanding] of Lahore. Major General Iftikhar Hassan Shah was serving in the Air Defence Command of the Army.

The DG's [Directors General] of both the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), Brigadier Imtiaz and Gen. Javed Nisar, were replaced after the dissolution of the Nawaz government. Imtiaz and Javed Nisar were considered close to Nawaz Sharif. Before the dismissal of the Nawaz governmnet, it was generally felt by concerned quarters that the DG's of ISI and IB were opposed to the policies of MI. However, the official ISPR [Inter Services Public Relations] sources claim the change in the MI is a routine matter.

The new MI chief is an experienced officer who served as the defense attache in New Delhi a few years ago. Some Army circles feel the recent changes in the ISI and IB will help develop a smooth working relationship between the two vital intelligence agencies of Pakistan. The new ISI DG has earlier been working as MI DG.

Army quarters ruled out change in the army's policy of non- interference in politics as announced by late COAS [Chief of Army Staff] Gen [General] Asif Nawaz. These quarters also refuted allegations that the army would or had been serving political interests of its 'supreme commander'. Moreover, new appointments against vacant posts of master general ordnance, engineer-in-chief, inspector general training and evaluation and deputy chief of general staff are also likely to be made.

Court Meets in Camera on Assembly Dissolution

BK1905150293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] The Supreme Court today held a hearing of the petition challenging the dissolution of the National Assembly in camera for one hour. The attorney general, Mr. Aziz A. Munshi, had prayed that some various sensitive matters of national importance which had relevance with the dissolution of the National Assembly had to be brought to the notice of the court in camera. The full bench of the court headed by Chief Justice Mr. Justice Nasim Hasan Shah accepted the prayer of the attorney general and allowed the senior counsels of the petitioner to be present during the in-camera proceedings.

The court, however, did not grant the prayer of the provinces to include them as parties in the case at this stage of the hearing. The chief justice said the advocate general of all the provinces may make their submissions on constitutional terms at the conclusion of the arguments of the attorney general and the petitioner's counsel.

Earlier, the advocate general of Punjab had submitted before the court that there was now a new government in the province. He apprehended if the National Assembly was restored, working relationship between the Federation and the Punjab Province will not be able to [word indistinct] within the parameters of the Constitution. The advocate general of the Sindh and the NWFP [Northwest Frontier Province] also made similar submissions.

The attorney general, Mr. Aziz A. Munshi, today completed his arguments in support of the grounds of dissolution order and started his legal arguments when the court adjourned for the day. Mr. Yahya Bakhtiar, the senior counsel for the petitioner, also briefly addressed the court on the contents of the president's annual address to the joint session of the two houses of Parliament.

The hearing will now be resumed on Saturday [22 May].

Sri Lanka

UNP Largest Party After Provincial Council Polls

BK1905134893 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 May 93

[Text] The ruling United National Party [UNP] emerged as the largest single party in six of the seven provincial councils for which elections were held on Monday. The UNP has gained absolute majorities in Central, Uva, Sabaragamuwa, and North-Central provinces. In the North-Western and Southern provinces, its strength is slightly lower than that of the combined opposition. The Sri Lanka Freedom Party led by (Porijana Eksath Peramuna) won Western Provincial Council. It received 43 seats to 41 of the UNP and qualified for two additional bonus seats. [sentence as heard] The ruling party scored the highest number of votes in over 100 of the 136 electoral districts in which elections were held. The UNP topped the vote even in the traditional opposition strongholds of Kalutara, Ratnapura and Hambantota. A significant feature of the election was the total rejection of nine of the 10 independent groups.

Minister for Constitutional, State Affairs Appointed

BK2005092893 Colombo LANKAPUVATH in English 0856 GMT 20 May 93

["OANA/pool" item]

[Text] Colombo, 20 May (LANKAPUVATH)—K.N. Choksy, PC [President's Counsel], MP, took his oath before President D.B. Wijetunge as minister of constitutional and state affairs at a ceremony held at the President's Office in Parliament, Thursday morning.

A press release issued by the Presidential Secretariat in Colombo states that the new minister will be in charge of constitutional matters and matters relating to state affairs.

Mr. Choksy is a leading lawyer, who as a member of parliament on the United National Party's national list has been the government spokesman on constitutional and state affairs.

He successfully defended President Ranasinghe Premadasa in the Supreme Court on an election petition filed against him by Mrs. Sirima Bandaranaike.

He also successfully defended in court the expulsion of DUNF [Democratic United National Front] leader Lalith Athulathmudali, Gamini Dissanayake and others after their failure to have president Premadasa impeached.

Mr. Choksy hails from a well known Colombo family and his father N.K. Choksy was a Queen's Counsel and leading Sri Lankan lawyer.